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Exploring the Educational Possibilities of MOTION PICTURES

By FREDERICK H. BAIR

IN ITS report on "Technological Trends and National Policy" published in June, 1937, the National Resources Committee attempted to predict some of the implications, in terms of significant social change, of certain major inventions. Among mechanical contraptions cited as most influential during the past thirty years, the Committee included the motion picture.

No one would challenge this estimate of the "movie" as a social force, even in the present phase of its development, in which it is used almost exclusively as entertainment. "This great industry . . . which today in the United States draws every ten days, patrons equivalent in number to the whole population," says the Report, "like the telephone and the automobile, has helped knit the territory together in a psychological sense, for the entire population is now exposed to the same stimuli—the same news, the same stories, the same type of manners and morals."

The *Literary Digest* (January 6, 1934) observed that the "United States is still five times as movie-minded as the rest of the world," furnishing four-fifths of the money invested, producing and distributing four-fifths of the films, and collecting at the ticket window an average of "eighty cents per house-hold of five, per week."

Beyond our national borders, however, it should be remembered that the films shown make their impression on a world more than half of whom know nothing, or next to nothing, of reading, so that the effects of the pictures are extraordinarily influential. The motion picture, even when produced for amusement or entertainment alone, helps to mold the mentality of the world.

But the motion picture is far from having reached its full development, either technologically or socially. As an invention, "needless to say, commercial television would constitute a movie revolution that would make the talkie upheaval look like a county election campaign," as Philip Sterling and Dorothy Dannen have remarked in "Who Owns the Movies?", and Samuel G. Hibben, director of applied lighting for the Westinghouse Lamp Company, has suggested that "reading in bed will hold even greater pleasure when the talking book of tomorrow takes its place on the library shelf!"

Color is already half-way an accomplished

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The author states: "The impasse has been that schools have refused to equip for educational motion pictures until a convincing supply of such pictures is available. . . . Today this impasse seems in a fair way to be broken." Doctor Bair is superintendent of schools of Bronxville, New York. He is a member of the educational advisory committee which is working with the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America.*

condition, and the *New York Times*, reporting a meeting of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers on October 11, 1937, described as an entirely new effect in talking pictures, "stereophonic" or third-dimension sound, wherein sound effects and dialogue emanate directly from their points of origin on the motion picture screen. . . . A new process of photographing and viewing stereoscopic films through polarized glass also was demonstrated." Presumably the three dimension picture, both for the ear and the eye, will not baffle the wizards of the cinema much longer. Decidedly, here is an invention whose technological effects are yet to be experienced in their entirety.

If, within a short quarter of a century, the effect of such an invention has been so vast in its development as an instrument of commercial profit and entertainment, the question is bound to be faced sooner or later: What are its possibilities as a serious and considered instrument of education?

This is a very large question, which breaks down at once into a number of sub-inquiries, e.g.: What effects, good or bad, particularly upon children and young people, may be reasonably attributed to the motion pictures, in their present commercial phase? Can motion pictures deliberately intended to be educational greatly reduce or eliminate the undesirable, and preserve or enhance the desirable, effects? What accounts for the lag in the use of motion pictures in the schools? What is being done, on the one hand by commercial motion picture producers and on the other by educators, to deal constructively with this lag? What are the potential modifications in educational practice which can reasonably be expected from an extended use of motion pictures in the school?

As a part of the Payne Fund Studies on "Motion Pictures and Youth", conducted under the chairmanship of Professor W. W. Charters and published in 1934, Edgar Dale calculated that there were in weekly attendance at motion pictures throughout the nation 11,000,000 children under 14 years of age and 28,000,000 minors.

These Studies established the fact that "a parent . . . can count on his child (8 years old) to see approximately 3 out of the 5 things he sees, his 11 or 12 year old child to see 3 out of 4, and his 15 or 16 year old to catch 9 out of 10."

And what they see, they remember. "The second-third grade children at the end of the six weeks remember 90 per cent of what they knew on the day following the show. Three months after seeing the show, they remember as much as they did six weeks after seeing it . . . the amount of information gained from motion pictures by children of all ages is tremendously high."

In the shaping of social attitudes, the Payne Fund Studies conclude that "the attitude of children toward a social value (war, crime, sex, and the like) can be measurably changed by one exposure to a picture . . . continual exposure to pictures of similar character will in the end produce a measurable change of attitude. What the range and limits of such influence may be we do not know." Since attitudes tend to determine actions, this is a fact of first importance to education.

The same studies concluded that the sampling of instances of fright, sorrow, love and excitement provided evidence "sufficient to establish the point that motion pictures may play very vividly upon a given emotion in the individual" to a point where "seeing some films induces a disturbance of relaxed, recuperative sleep in children to a degree which, if indulged with sufficient frequency, can be regarded as detrimental to normal health and growth."

Says Dr. Charters: "The motion picture is an extremely powerful medium of education . . . the range of influence is very wide. . . . The world of phantasy of children and young people of both sexes is ruled by movie subjects . . . they stir emotions, give techniques of action . . . stir powerful ambitions, good and bad, develop permanent

ideals, high and low, and crystallize the framework of life careers."

Since it appears that children are now and are to be in the future immensely affected by motion pictures, in any event, the question of how those effects may be made less dangerous and more educational becomes a very significant one. A number of steps appear to be emerging as practical.

First of all, it is desirable to protect children deliberately against the disintegrating impact of any sort of commercial movie, no matter how good—against an overdose, let us say, of love, sex and crime, which, in 1930, constituted 72 per cent of the themes, according to the Payne Fund Study, and to which they refer as the "Big Three". Children may be in part insulated against "emotional possession" by being taught how pictures are made, how effects are produced, what makes a picture artistically good or bad—building up in them what psychologists have called "emotional detachment" or "adult discount".

To this end, educators have already been busy. Dale wrote, as one of the thirteen volumes of the Payne Fund Studies, a manual for high-school students called "How to Appreciate Motion Pictures". The Photoplay Committee of the National Studies issued by Educational and Recreational Guides, Incorporated, under the editorship of Max J. Herzberg and William Lewin, are recommended by the Motion-Picture Committee of the Department of Secondary Education of the National Education Association. These studies appear in the form of guides for the appreciation of particular commercial films which seem to have educational value, usually for history or English classes. The American Council on Education has issued during the current year two pamphlets, "The Motion Picture in Education" and "Teaching With Motion Pictures".

A second step toward the protection of children against bad commercial motion pictures lies in the improvement of the commercial films. The boycott of objectionable films by the Catholic Church through the Legion of Decency in December, 1934, was timed very closely to the "Conclusion" of the Payne Fund Study which read: "The situation points unmistakably to the establishment by the producers of a children's department . . . to experiment, to try out, to eliminate, to press persistently until they produce proper solutions to the problem."

That there already have been many great children's films produced, in part, as an effort to attain this end, is illustrated by such pictures as "David Copperfield", "Little Women", "Heidi", and many others.

A third great step toward the discontinuing of the effect of mis-educative commercial films would be the use of what genuinely educational films are already available, and the production of new ones for actual use in the schools themselves. The interested layman might very well ask why an educational instrument so potent as the motion picture should show such a great lag in its general use by schools. For, said Dr. Mark May, Director of the Institute of Human Relations at Yale University:

"Today there are 18,000 motion picture theatres in America . . . at the same time there are approximately 100,000 school houses which have electric current, of which not more than 10,000 are equipped with motion-picture projectors. Less than 1,000 of these projectors are sound machines, of which not more than six or seven hundred are 16 mm.—rapidly becoming the standard instrument for classroom instruction. Sixteen million children are served by 10,000 projectors, many of which are obsolete, and 10,000 films of unknown educational values.

The reasons for this great lag are many. Easy commercial pickings for the motion picture as entertainment, conservatism, and lack of technique on the part of the educators (Says the American Council on Education, "Of the 1,200 teacher-training institutions in the United States, only a few more than 100 provide definite training in the selection and use of motion pictures and

allied teaching aids"), lack of evaluated films routinized in their rate and methods of rental. "The 10,000 existing educational films are distributed by no less than 500 agencies," and these films are of every degree of educational quality and value.

In effect, the impasse has been that schools have refused to equip for educational motion pictures until a convincing supply of such pictures are available, and producers have been uninterested in supplying such pictures until schools are equipped and disposed to make use of them.

Today this impasse seems in a fair way to be broken—by the utilization of whatever educational motion-picture material, carefully reviewed, improved, and catalogued, already exists in commercial "shorts", and by the production of fresh materials by commercial producers who have utilized the advice of educators.

That valuable and powerful educational material exists has already been somewhat convincingly demonstrated. Four years ago, the committee on Social Values in Motion Pictures, with Dr. Howard LeSourd, Dean of the Boston Graduate School as its chairman, in coöperation with the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association, made up, from excerpts from commercial films, a series of two-reel pictures known as the "Secrets of Success" series. Each one was built around a significant social or moral problem. They have been used by schools and non-academic educational agencies with powerful effect.

More recently, the Commission on Human Relations of the Progressive Education Association, under the chairmanship of Dr. Alice Keliher, has carried this movement further—specifically in guidance, personal and social adjustments, and mental hygiene.

Now comes a third movement, working on these exploratives, and experimental foundations. An educational advisory committee is working with the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America. They review, appraise, catalog, and rent all available existing films of educational value, and produce new films for use by schools.

During the past summer, this committee of unpaid, voluntary advisers have set up a series of panels on Art Education, Elementary Education, Biological Science and Nature Study, Physical Education, Social Studies, Human Relations, Music Education, and Physical Science, under the respective chairmanships of Professor Farnum; Mrs. Bess B. Lane, of the New York Ethical Culture Schools; Dr. Paul B. Mann of the New York City Public Schools; Professor Nash; Professor Carl W. Bigelow of the Commonwealth Fund (Carnegie Foundations); Dr. William M. Gregory of the Cleveland Public Schools' Educational Museum; Dr. Keliher; Dr. James Murscell of Teachers College, Columbia University; and Dr. Dana Jackson, Head of the Department of Chemical Engineering of Columbia.

The work of reviewing available pictures of potential educational value was extended beyond the member companies of the M.P.P.D.A. in an attempt to secure an appraisal of the "cream of the existing crop" of pictures for school use.

Some 16,000 pictures received 2,177 reviews by these committees and were rated "A", "B", and "C". "A" pictures are adjudged educationally desirable in their present form; "B", desirable if some amendments are made, and "C", undesirable. In round numbers, 1,000 pictures were rated "A", 250 "B", and 650 "C". These approved pictures will be catalogued at once and made available for educational use, the reviewing of current theatrical shorts will be continued, and new educational films will be sponsored by the Advisory Committee.

There is every indication that the use of motion pictures in education is entering upon a new and important phase. The University of Chicago is developing a program for the use of Motion Pictures and Radio, and educators elsewhere are upon the march in ways which will immensely effect the technique of learning in the immediate future.

Pendleton, Ore., Teachers Are Organized for LOW-COST
GROUP INSURANCE

By CLARENCE HINES

WHAT CAN the average teacher do when confronted with loss of salary due to inability to be at school because of accidental injury or illness? What protection is there available for a teacher with a moderate income and very little in reserve if that income is shut off?

These questions and similar ones faced the teaching staff of the Pendleton, Oregon, public schools during the winter of 1935, when one of their number was out of school with a serious illness which had every appearance of extending into several months' duration.

Several answers were suggested. The most common ones were: that a teacher might borrow from a bank or loan company; that loans or gifts might be offered by fellow teachers; or that the teacher might anticipate such an emergency by carrying some form of health and accident insurance which would in part, at least, compensate for salary loss.

Investigation and discussion revealed that many teachers were not at that time in a position to borrow further if an emergency arose. They had already secured loans for summer school attendance, medical attention for their families, or other purposes.

Few cared to consider the possibility of loans or gifts from fellow-teachers, even though such loans and gifts might be cheerfully offered with no strings attached.

The result was that majority opinion favored some form of group insurance which would afford the type of protection members of the group felt they needed.

A representative committee was designated to make a study, and report on a number of group insurance propositions. Their report revealed a number of pertinent things as far as group insurance policies by commercial companies was concerned.

These were: (1) That most group policies required a minimum of from 25 to 50 members and a premium of not less than $2.50 a month per member; (2) that group policies made no allowance for a good health record on the part of the members of the group; and (3) that an individual policy, such as some of the teachers were carrying, would cost from $60 to $75 a year—depending upon the company writing it and the amount of protection secured.

The committee also analyzed the local situation from the standpoint of group in-

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The author's subtitle on this article was, "What Pendleton Teachers Have Done to Protect Themselves Against Loss of Salary". When these teachers studied the problem they found that group-insurance policies of commercial companies were quite expensive. On April 1, 1935, they organized their own insurance program. Mr. Hines, principal of the Pendleton Senior High School, presents all of the pertinent facts in this article—and reports that the plan is a success. Our readers should consider this article in connection with "Little Rock Teachers Organize and Get Low-Cost Group Recreation", by Edith Leidy, which appeared in our December, 1937, issue.*

surance. It was found that the school district allowed each teacher three days on sick leave each year, with pay, but that these days were not cumulative.

The report revealed that the average age of Pendleton teachers was low and that there was a low average absence for each teacher. Records in the clerk's office for the past ten years were checked to determine the average absence and age of teachers. Commerical policies, based on figures for the country at large, made no provision for these factors.

The cost of individual protection and the minimum number required for a group policy, usually one-half the teaching staff, practically eliminated the possibility of dealing with any established insurance company. The committee, therefore, turned its attention to a study of city, county, or community insurance groups established by teachers in the Pacific Northwest and other parts of the country.

The investigators found that most such attempts were not founded on sound business principles and practices, as exemplified by the policies of the best old line companies writing group insurance. In many instances such attempts had failed to last very long. A common cause of their failure was their attempt to provide protection during the summer months, when many of their members apparently found it necessary to have operations.

In spite of the many failures of local insurance groups, the committee felt that an organization founded on sound business principles and modeled after the best in the commercial group policies could be made to work in Pendleton, and provide the desired protection.

Objections were voiced, however, when the committee made its recommendation. Some felt that the three days' absence allowed by the district each year should be made cumulative and so furnish more protection for the teacher who was able to stay on the job. Others felt that the teacher who subscribed to local group insurance and paid for two or three years before withdrawing from the system would not derive the same benefit as one who remained in the system and in the insurance group over a longer period.

It was pointed out that the same criticisms would apply to a commercial policy of a similar nature and that, after all, what most teachers really wanted was protection from loss of salary while they were employed in the Pendleton system.

Another basic criticism of the plan finally submitted was that the premiums, at least for the first two years, would need to be almost as high as the premium for a group policy from one of the commercial companies. It was argued that the policy might as well be taken in one of the old line companies and that the company could take the risk.

Statistics on the health record and average age of the Pendleton teachers finally proved convincing. It was agreed that after two or three years in which to build up a reserve, the premium payments of new members coming in each year would meet all benefit payments, maintain the reserve, and provide paid-up members with protection without cost. This apparent opportunity to "get something for nothing" had its usual appeal, and was the chief argument which led directly to a decision to organize a local insurance group.

The rules and regulations of the Pendleton Teachers Insurance Association, which went into effect on April 1, 1935, include the most essential features of the best commercial group policies studied by the teachers' committee, with such modifications as were deemed necessary to meet the local situation.

All full-time employees of the school district, from superintendent to janitors, are eligible for membership. Benefit payments do not begin until the eighth day of absence from school—calendar days, not school days, being counted—and continue at the rate of $100 per calendar month. The benefits peri-

od cannot exceed six months. The records of the district clerk are official in determining the date and duration of all absences.

Premiums, deducted from salary checks on the written consent of the association member, are paid at the rate of $2.00 a month until a reserve fund of $1,200 is established. At this point payments cease until the reserve falls to $800, when payments automatically begin again for all members. New members joining the association each year pay premiums for the same number of months as was required for the charter members to build up the original reserve.

The Association's affairs were handled for two years by a Council of five members, one each from the three grade schools and two from the high school. Since February 1, 1937, when a new junior high was established, the Council has consisted of seven members, to provide representation for the junior high teachers.

The officers of the Association and of the Council are the same: a chairman, a secretary, and a treasurer, who is the only bonded officer. None of the officers receive any remuneration for their work, and payments of association funds are made only on joint signature by the Chairman and the Treasurer of the Association. The Council meets monthly and the Association annually.

A membership of 31 had signed up by April 1, 1935, when the first premiums were collected and the insurance put in force. Since that time more than 50 individuals have belonged. The present membership is about 40, or approximately 80 per cent of those eligible for membership.

Benefits of almost $500 have been paid to members. About two-fifths of this went to one individual who was unfortunate enough to have two operations in consecutive years. The reserve fund, in the bank and in a savings and loan association, now amounts to almost $1,400, and is increasing at the rate of about $35 a month.

The charter members of the Association paid premiums for 19 months to build up the first reserve, and new members who have joined each year are adding to the reserve each month. Without an epidemic which would take out a large number of members at the same time, there is little chance that the charter members will be called on again for premium payments.

Members, whether or not they have had occasion to receive benefit payments, feel that they have a good thing in their group insurance and, without exception, those who have withdrawn have done so because they were leaving the system.

To an outsider it may seem that the plan has many weaknesses. No medical examination is required of new members, although the district may at any time require such an examination and so give the Association this added protection. The Association has no legal standing, that is, it is not incorporated. It is founded on and held together by a "gentlemen's agreement". It was conceded in advance by those most interested that the success of any such group depended upon the honor and integrity of its members and upon the willingness of the administration to dismiss any teacher who wilfully absented himself from school in order to draw insurance benefits.

To a member, however, weaknesses are not so apparent. His answer to any criticism is that it protects him partially from loss of salary for a maximum of six months and has so protected him and its other members for three years. The reserve is larger than was once thought necessary and is increasing.

In short, the Association has stood the test of a reasonable length of time and passes the test by which most innovations are judged: It works!

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Officials of the French Academy have estimated that there are 2,796 languages in the world.

POLITICS: HONORABLE!

John Burroughs Junior High School selects 25 boys each year for "Civicism, Unlimited"

By RALPH G. LINDSTROM

IN 1934, the writer, chairman of the Boys' Work Committee of the La Brea Optimist Club in Los Angeles, and Carter B. Cordner, then president of that club, went to the vice-principal in charge of boys, and one of the teachers of civics, both at John Burroughs Junior High School, and asked if they and their principal would collaborate in the selection of a group of boys of junior-high-school age, with outstanding indications of civic leadership, to study actual, practical politics as an honorable profession. The proposition was favorably received. As a result of a number of conferences, a constitution and a creed were drafted.

The creed of Civicism, Unlimited, presents no public profession. It involves no transcendent idealism. It is a self-promise to the end of enlightened self-preservation. This is the creed. (The constitution is too lengthy to be included in this article.):

PROMISE YOURSELF

To be an honorable, trustworthy and useful citizen of your city, of your state, of your country, of the world.

To understand politics as "the science and art of government."

To understand and respect political life as an honorable profession.

To learn how to understand the actual issues and purposes of all campaigns, for office or for the passage of laws.

To learn how to examine proposed laws to see, first, that it is possible of accomplishment and, second, that it is for the equal good of all.

To avoid the tendency as youths to believe that all change must be good, and as older men, that all change is bad.

To avoid cynical and sarcastic thought or reference to American life and government.

To think, study, understand and then tolerantly exchange views in the sportsmanship of the "Golden Rule".

To be as enthusiastic about progress in public, political life, as you are in your own.

To devote at least as much effort to public affairs as you expect of others.

To let your life exemplify CIVICISM.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The plan discussed in this article is now in its third year in the John Burroughs Junior High School, Los Angeles, California. The author is co-founder of "Civicism, Unlimited".*

By a method which made use of teacher and pupil judgments and eliminated personal prejudice, twenty-five ninth grade boys who were outstanding in the qualities of responsibility and leadership, were selected.

These boys met bi-monthly to engage in activities which would further the views of the founders.

Civicism, Unlimited, is now in its third year of modest growth. It takes twenty-five boys each year, selected from the ninth grade of John Burroughs Junior High School for indications of social and civic leadership. At this writing there are seventy-five members of the Club who are in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades of high school.

For six months the boys are probationary members, and then, if they continue to qualify, they become active members. They meet every two weeks, outside of school, to

hear talks on, and to discuss, political and civic matters. The meetings do not deal with the mere theory of civics. They deal with actual, practical politics. Civicists advocate nothing but political and civic interest. They favor no candidate and no law, but a genuine understanding of candidates, or proposed law, and the ways and means of politics.

At the meetings each new group of probationary members is given a thorough groundwork in the lessons in actual practical politics to be found in the life of Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln is traced from his youth to the end of his career. His political mistakes as well as his political achievements are carefully studied and analyzed. His actual performance as state legislator in Illinois, and as Congressman, are thoroughly investigated. The political side of the Lincoln-Douglas debate and of the controversy over the Kansas-Nebraska constitution is also subjected to careful investigation.

The political life of George Washington and of his contemporaries receives consideration, but not so exhaustively as that of Lincoln.

While politics is always the subject of discussion, debate, and lecture, and every boy is given the greatest freedom in expressing his views, yet the greatest care is taken to keep any partisan purpose out of the organization.

The speakers are political and civic leaders throughout Los Angeles County. The judges of our courts, as they have come to understand Civicism, have given the most hearty coöperation. Every outside speaker submits to at least a half hour of open forum discussion, and without exception such speakers have been delighted with the understanding indicated by the questions of the boys.

There have been debates among the boys about the NRA, and the AAA. They have compared the present civic situation in the United States with that in countries abroad. They have had debates on the political side of labor legislation and of legislation on behalf of industry. They have considered the initiative and referendum and recall of officers, the direct primary, etc.

Above all, however, in each meeting there is held before Civicists the main theme that "politics is the science and art of government". The boys are learning to be practical idealists. They understand that politics as a career does not necessarily mean merely the holding of public office—that rather it means being a civic leader and a genuine American citizen, whether in office, or out of office and supporting those in office.

The aim is to create units of Civicism, Unlimited, for the purpose of selecting boys with ear-marks of civic leadership, and to follow them through junior and senior high school and college, in the hope that when voting age is attained, these young men may work and vote in the party of their choosing, as intelligent individuals and leaders in political life; may possibly be inspired to specialized educational training for a public career; may further and foster the idea that politics is an honorable profession. There is now being evolved a chart to accompany the constitution and by-laws, and general instructions for the founding and operation of other units of Civicism.

Will the plan succeed? I do not know. The school people concerned have rendered invaluable assistance to the author in the founding of Civicism. Carter B. Cordner, Esq., an earnest, high-minded citizen, has, almost from the beginning, labored as cofounder of this beginning.

The boys who belong to Civicism seem deeply interested. Will their interest be sufficient? Will parental encouragement of the plan be sufficient? Will multiplicity of curricular and extracurricular demands leave opportunity sufficient for success in self-government and for operation of units of Civicism?

We do not know. And if not, it will not mean that the purpose is wrong. It may

mean that the plan is wrong. It may mean that we are so eager to give our children culture and an understanding of how to make a living, that we are overlooking the necessity for teaching them how to preserve the civilization which is the only means of cultural and free living.

Civicism is not in competition with the fine work of The Junior Statesmen of America. That, however, is an organization which by its very nature is for the purpose of primarily training intelligent followers. Its meetings are in the schools, largely, and all who wish, without particular qualification, may join. Its larger meetings do not permit of a more intimate study of practical politics. Its work is highly important and it may well be that its organization will successfully survive while that of Civicism may not. The writer has been asked to serve as a director of Junior Statesmen. This is mentioned so that no thought of competitive purpose may be left with the reader.

Both of these organizations are experiments in plans to establish politics as an honorable profession in this country. If either succeeds it may do incalculable good. Two things *are* certain:

(1) That mere wishful thinking will not preserve representative democracy, and

(2) Intelligent training and *practice* in citizenship and public life, are prerequisites to the vastly better civilization which may be the only alternative to any civilization at all.

When Mr. John Citizen ceases to look for discriminatory favor before the law, whether from court, legislator or executive; when his civic interest remains active beyond the immediate occasion of personal or group interest; when he actually comes to the realization that his own self-preservation is bound up in an intelligent, active and continuous interest in general political affairs—then he is ready for actual participation in political reform, to the degree of his political understanding. High standards? Certainly! But not a bit higher than the hypocritical, unthinking critic would exact of the man he elects to and abandons in office.

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Digest Subscriptions Free to Valedictorians

A free gift of a one-year subscription to *The Reader's Digest* will be given to each valedictorian graduating from a senior high school in the United States during May or June, 1938. *The Reader's Digest* announces the following rules:

"To avoid confusion and duplication, subscriptions will be entered *only at the written request of high school principals or school superintendents.* Letters of request should contain the name and home address of the valedictorian to be honored, the name of the high school, and the name of the principal. They must be addressed to Valedictorian Department, *The Reader's Digest,* Pleasantville, N.Y. Subscriptions will begin with the July issue. An inscribed Certificate of Award which may be presented at graduation exercises will be mailed to the principal."

As some high schools do not formally nominate a valedictorian, THE CLEARING HOUSE assumes that administrators of such schools may claim subscriptions for the highest-ranking graduate.

Why Secondary-School Pupils

LEAVE SCHOOL

By WALTER CROSBY EELLS

IN THE early fall of the school year 1936-1937, the Cooperative Study of Secondary-School Standards sent out ten special test administrators, who gave a series of standard tests to 19,732 pupils in 198 secondary schools located in the forty-eight states and the District of Columbia.

As far as possible a random selection of 110 juniors was tested in each school. In schools in which the total number in the junior class was less than 110, equal numbers of seniors and sophomores were included, as far as possible, to make up this number. Approximately two-thirds of the original group were juniors, one-sixth seniors, and one-sixth sophomores.

In order to secure a measure of growth during the year, these men again visited the schools in the late spring of 1937 to give equivalent forms of the same test to the same pupils. As a matter of fact, however, only 17,301 of the original group were available for testing when the test administrators visited the schools a second time—a mortality of 2,431 or 14.1 per cent.

This report is devoted to an analysis of the reasons for this striking pupil mortality in less than a single academic year. The average time elapsing between the two visits of the test administrators was 31 weeks. On this second visit each test administrator secured from the local school a report of the reasons for the absence of the pupils who were not available for retesting.

Reasons for absence were reported under seven headings, as shown in Table I.

Evidently 45 per cent of the absences were temporary in nature while 55 per cent had severed their connection with the school entirely during the intervening seven months. For convenience, these two groups may be spoken of as those *temporarily absent* and those *permanently absent*. Of the 1,102 temporarily absent, 520 or slightly less than half were reported as away on account of illness. Many of the others probably were absent for the same reason, but this would not have been known until after the return of the absentees. In a few schools the homes of the absent pupils were called on the telephone to ascertain the reasons for this absence, before the blank was filled out, but in most schools this was not done.

If the same percentage of temporary absence (for illness and other reasons) holds each day of the year as on the particular day the tests were given, the annual absence for each pupil amounts to a substantial amount —a full two weeks. Although absence for illness seems very high, the number of fatal

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *The 198 high schools taking part in the Cooperative Study of Secondary School Standards had an enrollment of 19,732 pupils at the beginning of the school year. In less than a full school year, 2,431 of these pupils were missing from school. This article is based upon a study of the reasons for this mortality of 14.1 per cent of the school population. Doctor Eells is coordinator of the Cooperative Study, which has headquarters at 744 Jackson Place, Washington, D.C. The first article of this series appeared in the April issue of* THE CLEARING HOUSE.

TABLE I
REASONS FOR ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL OF 2,431 SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS

Reason	*Number*		*Per cent of total number*	
Still enrolled in the school				
Absent for illness	520		21.4	
Absent for other reasons	582		23.9	
Total		1,102		45.3
No longer enrolled in the school				
Graduated	16		0.7	
Moved away	439		18.1	
Dropped for poor scholarship	146		6.0	
Deceased	10		0.4	
Other reasons and unknown	718		29.5	
Total		1,329		54.7

illnesses was found to be abnormally low.

In a group of 20,000 pupils, the American Experience Table of Mortality predicts approximately 89 deaths among young people of high-school age during a period of seven months. According to the United States Census Life Tables, the number of deaths would be 40. Actually only ten deaths were reported. Is this some evidence that emphasis on health education in elementary and secondary schools is having some effect?

Although no request was made for specific information regarding the absence of the 718 pupils classified under the heading, "Other reasons and unknown", such information was volunteered for approximately 40 per cent of the group. Of the 279 for whom specific reasons were given, almost half, 133, left school to go to work. Of the girls, 66 were reported as leaving to be married. Ill health accounted for 37 withdrawals; transfer to another school, 15; dismissal or expulsion, 15; joining the CCC, 8; joining the Navy, 3; while two pupils from private boarding schools were reported as withdrawing on account of homesickness!

TABLE II
PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS ABSENT, BY SCHOOLS

Per cent of absence	*Number of schools*
0– 4.9	10
5.0– 9.9	74
10.0–14.9	58
15.0–19.9	35
20.0–24.9	11
25.0–25.9	7
30.0–34.9	2
40.0–44.9	1
	198

Analysis by Schools. The percentage of total absence by schools varied widely, from one school with no absentees and four schools with only one absence each, to one school with a 44 per cent absence. A summary is shown in Table II.

Analysis by Mental Levels. On the basis of the psychological test used in the fall of 1937,[1] the pupils were divided into five groups in standard deviation intervals. It is interesting to observe the percentage of drop-outs at each of these levels. This is shown in Table III.

For those who left school for poor scholarship or other and unknown reasons, decrease in mental level is striking, the mortality among the very inferior pupils being four or five times as great as among the very superior pupils. Even among those temporarily absent, there is a tendency for the two lower levels to absent themselves, for illness or other reasons, more frequently

[1] For a summary of this phase of the Cooperative Study, see Walter C. Eells, "The Scholastic Ability of Secondary-School Pupils," *Educational Record* (January 1937), XVIII, pp. 53-67.

than for the average or superior pupils to do so.

Analysis by sex. The percentage of mortality tended to be higher for boys than for girls, but the differences are not marked. They are shown in Table IV.

Analysis by class. Variation in absence for the different classes shows somewhat opposite tendencies for temporary and for the three types of permanent absence, as summarized in Table V.

Analysis by type of school. The proportionate absence was decidedly greater in the public schools—40 per cent—than in the private schools. Table VI shows the relative percentages.

Analysis by regional associations. Distinct differences in the amount of absence were found in the different geographical regions making up the territories of the six associations of colleges and secondary schools comprising the Cooperative Study. There is a general trend toward increase in both temporary and permanent absence from East to West, the total amount in California, the territory of the Western Association, being more than 60 per cent greater than in New England. Absence for "other and unknown" reasons reaches a maximum in the territory of the Southern Association. The situation in the six regions is shown in Table VII.

Analysis by size of school. No significant variation in absence is found when the schools are classified by size. Table VIII shows the facts.

Analysis by accreditation. The percentage

TABLE III
PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS ABSENT, BY MENTAL LEVELS

	Number in fall	*Temporarily absent*	*Moved, Graduated, Deceased*	*Dropped for poor Scholarship*	*Other and Unknown*
Very superior	1,330	5.2	2.0	0.1	1.4
Superior	4,911	5.0	2.2	0.4	1.8
Average	6,972	4.9	2.5	0.5	3.2
Inferior	5,125	6.5	2.6	1.3	5.3
Very inferior	1,394	9.0	1.9	1.9	8.3
	19,732	5.6	2.4	0.7	3.6

TABLE IV
PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS ABSENT, BY SEX

	Number in fall	*Temporarily absent*	*Moved, Graduated, Deceased*	*Dropped for poor Scholarship*	*Other and Unknown*
Boys	9,699	5.8	2.3	1.1	3.8
Girls	10,033	5.4	2.4	0.4	3.5

TABLE V
PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS ABSENT, BY CLASS

	Number in fall	*Temporarily absent*	*Moved, Graduated, Deceased*	*Dropped for poor Scholarship*	*Other and Unknown*
Seniors	3,477	6.3	1.6	0.6	2.5
Juniors	13,190	5.6	2.3	0.7	4.0
Sophomores	3,065	4.8	3.2	0.8	3.3

TABLE VI
PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS ABSENT, BY TYPE OF SCHOOL

	Number in fall	*Temporarily absent*	*Moved Graduated, Deceased*	*Dropped for poor Scholarship*	*Other and Unknown*
In public schools	17,202	5.8	2.6	0.7	3.7
In private schools	2,530	4.3	1.0	0.7	3.1

TABLE VII
PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS ABSENT, BY REGIONAL ASSOCIATION

	Number in fall	*Temporarily absent*	*Moved, Graduated, Deceased*	*Dropped for poor Scholarship*	*Other and Unknown*
New England	2,012	4.5	1.2	0.5	3.7
Middle States	2,279	5.7	1.8	0.6	3.2
North Central	8,823	5.4	2.5	0.7	2.9
Southern	4,127	5.4	2.1	0.8	5.8
Northwest	1,572	6.9	3.2	1.0	2.7
Western	919	7.8	4.1	1.1	3.0

TABLE VIII
PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS ABSENT, BY SIZE OF SCHOOL

	Number in fall	*Tempo-rarily absent*	*Moved, Graduated, Deceased*	*Dropped for poor Scholarship*	*Other and Unknown*
In 28 very large schools (over 1,000)	2,986	6.5	1.7	0.5	4.4
In 31 large schools (500–999)	3,410	4.7	2.3	0.9	4.1
In 65 medium sized schools (200–499)	6,822	5.1	2.5	0.6	3.3
In 76 small schools (below 200)	6,514	6.2	2.6	0.9	3.4

TABLE IX
PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS ABSENT, BY ACCREDITATION STATUS OF SCHOOLS

	Number in fall	*Tempo-rarily absent*	*Moved, Graduated, Deceased*	*Dropped for poor Scholarship*	*Other and Unknown*
In 175 accredited schools	17,873	5.3	2.2	0.7	3.6
In 25 non-accredited schools	1,859	8.4	3.3	0.8	4.4

of absence is greater in the non-accredited schools than in those that are accredited or have an equivalent form of recognition by the regional associations, as shown in Table IX.

Summary. In secondary schools in the United States it may be expected that 7 or 8 per cent of the pupils enrolled at the beginning of the year will sever their connection with the school before the year closes, and that at least 6 per cent will be temporarily absent for illness or other reasons on an average day of the school year, according to our findings.

A greater degree of permanent and temporary absence is to be expected among pupils in the lower levels of mental ability than in those of superior ability. Public schools are likely to suffer more than private schools. Accredited schools hold their pupils better than the non-accredited schools. The schools in the Western part of the country suffer somewhat more from absences than those of the East or Middle West.

POSTURE TRAINING

By GRANT PAGE

THE POSTURE of the body speaks all the time and it tells many things about character, condition of health, early training, durability and stability.

The school and the home can coöperate effectively in training for habits of correct posture, and in many cases it is the school that needs to take the lead in order that these habits may be correctly formed.

Proper seats are necessary for good sitting postures, which have a direct effect on the spine, and the need for proper seating in our schools cannot be too greatly emphasized. Seats should be arranged to fit the abnormally large or small as well as the normal sized child. The elbows should be able to rest on the desk without stooping or elevating the shoulders. Many schools need adjustable desks and seats to secure the correct sitting posture for the different children that come to the school during a period of several years, and this type may prove more economical.

Perfectly fitted seats and desks are not everything, however. It is not the nature of a child to sit still long. If he sits still too long, the upper part of the body usually is lowered and it leans forward, thus constricting the chest, forming pressure on the abdominal organs, and hindering proper circulation of the blood. In a fatigued position, the child slumps back until the weight rests on the spine and the shoulder blades, and this results in shallow breathing.

The correct sitting posture is one in which the child sits normally straight, with the pelvis resting equally on the seat, and the head poised so as to bring the center of gravity in a straight line with the pelvic bones. This posture takes little muscular energy and is conducive to restfulness.

Deviations from this position need to be made during the regular school hours. Muscular activity away from the seat should be used to shorten the sitting periods. While the primary pupil may secure exercise by the use of different class games and exercises that require muscular movements, the child in the higher grades should have a period of corrective exercise once during each hour of sitting.

No person should maintain a sitting position for more than one hour at any one time, without a complete change of position. A standing or walking position may prove most useful to relax the exerted muscles used while sitting.

There is a test that is now extensively used by which the untrained teacher may form an accurate estimate of a child's posture. The first part of the test is designed to find the pupil's ability to take the erect attitude. The long axis of the head and neck is used to assist the eye of the observer. A vertical line may be dropped from the front of the ear to the forward part of the foot. In the poor posture the axis of the head, neck and trunk will form a zigzag.

While gymnastics have value in developing proper posture, it is necessary to form a logical sequence of habits in childhood. If the colleges teach that graceful carriage characterizes the well-bred man this training should start in preadolescence.

For proper growth and development the bones must be used correctly. Any constant incorrect use will result in distorted and crooked bones, and produce a form that is less efficient both mentally and physically.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Many facts concerning the need for posture training in our schools, and suggestions for a program, are offered in this article. Mr. Page is principal of Garfield School, Abilene, Kansas.*

Westwood High goes off the "gold-standard" MARKING SYSTEM

By GEORGE H. GEYER

EIGHT YEARS ago the Westwood Junior-Senior High School employed a system of pupil rating familiar to all. The mark of "A" in a subject was like so much gold coin. It had the same clink of authenticity when thrown upon the pine desk of the principal of the Blottsville High School in an anonymous state as it had in Montclair, New Jersey. The academic gold standard prevailed in those days.

Eight years ago, yes, four years ago, we religiously and regularly doled out the double eagles of "A" (was it 6% or 7%?), the five dollar gold pieces of "B", the silver of "C", the tarnished nickels of "D", and the dirty coppers of "F".

In addition, we employed a complicated system of so-called "service points". These were numerical rewards for participation in that variety of activities commonly called "extra-curricular".

Under such a system we gave encouragement to the practices of cheating and deception and did much to develop false standards of value among our pupils. We made mistakes familiar to all workers in education—mistakes caused in part by the inflexibilities inherent in such a system.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The Westwood Junior-Senior High School, states Dr. Irving R. Melbo, of the Research and Curriculum Department of the Oakland Public Schools, who sent Mr. Geyer's article to us, is one of the most progressive in California in its program of curriculum development. Its system of evaluating pupils, rather than giving them arbitrary marks, is in keeping with its curriculum. Mr. Geyer is district superintendent in Westwood, California.*

For example: A freshman boy was restless, did nothing. He was secretly worried over his father's loss of employment but said nothing about it. He was branded a poor student. Later, economic conditions improved, sympathetic guidance was accorded, and by graduation time he was an excellent student and citizen. Yet, those few bright red "F's" inscribed on his permanent record in his early high-school career still faintly damn him for certain types of advancement. In the eyes of certain institutions of society it is almost as though he had been convicted of a felony.

Another pupil took his high-school mathematics with a particularly poor class. The teacher was one of the many who marked on the basis of relative class standings. The pupil in question, the best in the class, was rated an "A". Upon graduation, he knew little of mathematics, yet had been led to believe that he had definite mathematical abilities. The rude awakening came in college.

All educational workers are familiar with the several research studies exposing the tremendous variations among subject-matter markings of competent and well trained teachers. All are familiar with the implications of these studies in regard to the "gold content" of the academic mark. There cannot be too much backing of real values when the same grade of work is shown to have been rated by different teachers all the way from "A+" to "F".

Some four years ago the transition toward a more human scheme of evaluation began in the Westwood High School. A form of reporting to the home was devised which sought to place primary emphasis upon a teacher rating of ten selected "school

habits". For the purpose of rating the pupil's development in skills and knowledges, a four-point scale was substituted for the traditional "five point".

This scale did not contain the word "failure". It employed the following terms: excellent, satisfactory, unsatisfactory, and incomplete. These four ratings were to be checked in terms of the pupil's capacity to achieve rather than in terms of his relative excellence of achievement.

This scheme, although more desirable to the group than the old, seemed not to achieve the goals hoped for by the faculty. Although considerable interest was aroused among the pupils in attaining good ratings in "school habits", the main focus of attention was still the subject-matter mark, with not too much regard as to how it was attained.

From time to time in our weekly faculty meetings we discussed methods of improving the system. There was common agreement that a symbolic mark was a poor device to represent the degree to which a pupil had developed the ability, for example, to make a good speech.

The suggestion of substituting a letter to the home in the place of a formal mark was considered at some length. Two teachers conducted experiments over a period of a year in using letters to replace the report card in their classes. It was eventually felt that the use of letters, *if required at stated intervals for all pupils,* might well become as meaningless and as stereotyped as the subject marks they replaced.

We still agreed that the subject mark ought to be eliminated if we were ever to be free to develop a system for the all-round evaluation of the pupil's *total* development.

This school year we took another step forward (some would say backward) in this transition between a formalized system of pupil rating to our goal of no periodic ratings.

Our parents are not quite ready to have no regular report come home at all. However, for the first time in the history of this high school we are neither sending home nor recording subject-matter marks. We are sending home at nine-week intervals a report form (printed in this article) which seeks subjectively to present a partial picture of school habits. Each teacher checks one of these rating scales for every pupil under his jurisdiction. A clerical worker transcribes onto one form the ratings of the individual teachers, and this composite rating is sent to the home.

This eliminating of subject-matter marks does not mean that we have a lessened concern with the development of knowledges and skills. On the contrary, we are very intensely concerned. One of the reasons for discarding subject marks is that we wish our pupils to become more actively concerned with the actual development of important skills and knowledges than with the getting of a mark.

What, then, are we doing to evaluate these developing abilities and skills in subject matter? How will we send a transcript of record to a school which demands that such be in the form of academic symbolism? As yet we have no answer to these questions that we can be dogmatic about. The procedures we propose to utilize at present are as follows.

We will collect a wide variety of information about each pupil and file it in individual folders. Some of the types of data we propose to collect are:

1. A rather complete standard test picture. There will be a six-year record of his progress in reading ability as measured by standard tests. Similar records will be kept of his ability to use the English language, his competence in using numerical symbols, and his factual knowledges in societal affairs. For a college preparatory pupil (few of ours are), there will be standard test data concerning his competence in algebra, formal chemistry, et cetera.

These test data are not being collected in lieu of subject marks. They are not regarded

as some sacred form of truth from the academic mountain tops. They are simply conceived as a part of the picture of the pupil, subject to all the inaccuracies which partial pictures present.

Name of Student _____

1. *Does he use his class time well?*
   Does not pay attention—even to easy work.
   Usually on the job.
   Always gives strict attention to work.
2. *Does he stick to his job until it is completed?*
   Seldom completes work.
   Tries to complete most of his work.
   Always completes work.
3. *Does he get along with other people?*
   Lacks courtesy or coöperation.
   Makes some effort to get along with other people.
   Gets along well with other people.
4. *Does he live up to his responsibilities?*
   Seldom equipped to do work; must be urged to do minimum tasks.
   Usually equipped to do work. Completes work unless something goes wrong.
   Always equipped to do work; completes work well and promptly, without being urged.
5. *Does he seem eager to improve himself?*
   Shows no interest or desire to improve himself.
   Shows some interest or desire to improve himself.
   Very great interest in improving his work and himself.
6. *Does he do careful accurate work?*
   Careless, ill prepared work all the time.
   Usually does fairly neat and accurate work.
   Always turns in accurate, carefully done work.
7. *Does he treat property of others with respect?*
   Throws paper on floor; careless with books and property.
   Usually careful with property in his care.
   Takes pride in caring for property and equipment.
8. *Does he attend class with regularity?*
   Often absent or tardy.
   Usually at class—on time.
   Never absent or tardy unless absolutely necessary.
9. *Does he practice healthful habits?*
   Appears sleepy; lacks personal cleanliness; careless of infection.
   Usually rested; clean; realizes need for care of infections.
   Always rested; well groomed; careful about infections.

2. Standards of attainment reports which will be filed in the pupil folders. These standards seek to appraise the extent to which the objectives of the several subjects are achieved. Our progress in this phase of evaluation is not sufficient at present to allow the reporting of helpful examples. Some outstanding work along this line has been done in the Secondary School of the Colorado State College of Education.[1]

3. School-habits reports.

4. Many actual samples of the pupil's work.

5. The recorded results of interviews with pupils, parents, and others.

6. Records of attendance.

7. Records of participation in school activities, and in out-of-school recreational and work activities.

8. Health records.

9. Copies of letters sent home.

10. Case studies where necessary, and reports of the counseling committee.

When it becomes necessary to send a transcript of a pupil's record to another institution, the counseling committee will meet with one or two teachers who have known the pupil and his work. The committee will endeavor to translate the mass of information in the pupil's folder into subject marks in case the institution to which he is transferring demands it. It is felt that marks so determined will be at least as accurate, if not more so, than those gathered in the traditional fashion.

To date we have found that this scheme

[1] Wrinkle, William L., "The Story of a Secondary-School Experiment in Marking and Reporting". *Educational Administration and Supervision*, Vol. XXIII, No. 7, pp. 481-500.

This material was run lengthwise on the two inside pages of the Westwood School's report form. Because of space limitations, we have altered radically the format of this portion of the report. In the original there was adequate space for the teacher to elaborate upon any of the three statements under each question.

seems to be welcomed by the parents. It rather forces the parents of the better type into more intimate contact with the school if they are to get a picture of the accomplishments of their children. In this way, they obtain a more complete picture of the pupil's progress than was formerly the case.

Name of student_____

Grade & Section_____

Core course teacher_____

WESTWOOD JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

To Students and Parents:

The faculty of your school considers the rating which is made in this report to be of very great importance for successful living in school and out. Each mark indicates the judgement of one of your teachers. Every effort should be made to develop these qualities to such a degree that all of the marks come to be placed far to the right.

It will be the responsibility of teachers to communicate with the home when students show a probability of failing in work for a marking period. In the absence of any such communication the student is entitled to believe that his work is of an acceptable nature and that he will be given credit for the course.

Students planning on going to college should, at the end of every year, get each of their teachers to file a statement of ability to do college work in the office for them.

The teachers who have made the enclosed ratings will welcome an opportunity to discuss the student's development with parents or guardians. Please call 217 for an appointment.

_____
Signature of Parent or Guardian

Student's Daily Schedule	Teacher
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	

In the above box is reproduced the first page of the Westwood Junior-Senior High School's four-page report form. The original page was 7 by 8½ inches, and its spacious blank lines are merely indicated here. The matter contained on the other pages of the report form is given in succeeding boxes. Readers who write to the school for copies of the original should send return postage.

We believe that the home and the school should try to give the child the kind of experiences which will help him to develop:

1. A high degree of physical and mental health.
2. Wholesome social relationships.
3. The ability and desire to be of service to the social groups of which he is a member.
4. Knowledge about and a desire for a normal family life.
5. The ability and desire to express his thoughts clearly, forcefully and accurately.
6. Vocational alertness leading to a proper vocational choice.
7. Critical-mindedness in relation to propaganda, advertising, and pressure groups.
8. The ability and desire to spend money wisely.
9. The ability to plan for the effective use of his time.
10. An ability to enjoy and interpret properly the newer forms of communication—the modern press, the radio, the movies.
11. Discrimination or good taste in the ways in which he chooses to spend his leisure time.
12. The ability and desire to create and appreciate beauty in the several environments in which he spends his time.
13. An understanding of and an appreciation for the world of nature.
14. A philosophy or scheme of life which fits into and contributes to our democratic social order.

This announcement to parents occupied the fourth page of the Westwood School's report form.

The parents of only 2 out of 472 pupils have registered protests.

The acceptance of the present plan for evaluation on the part of the parents is due in part to the holding of preliminary conferences with pupils and parents, meetings, and letters to parents. To a far larger degree, we suspect, it is due to the apathy which seems to characterize so many of our parents.

Our teachers find that the trend toward a more fundamental evaluation of that which we say we are doing for youth, is much more demanding than the periodic parceling out of marks under the traditional plan. The problem of scheduling enough teacher and counseling time to make this scheme workable is a major one in any school not blessed with adequate funds.

JOHNNY GETS *a* BREAK

Prescott junior-senior high-school teachers write one-paragraph "citations" to parents

By MARTIN H. MUNZ

WHEN THE parents of a boy or girl receive a letter from the school officials, there often is as much excitement and suspense as when an infrequent telegram arrives at the home. This feeling of tenseness is due to the fact that the schools usually have restricted their relationships with their patrons to the times when difficulties with pupils have arisen. The parents, therefore, upon receiving a letter from the school, naturally think of trouble and wonder what difficulty Johnny is in now.

This situation certainly has done nothing to further the spirit of good will and understanding between the school and its patrons; in fact, in many cases it has done quite the opposite.

In an effort to improve the student-teacher relationship and bring about closer coöperation between the home and the school, Prescott Junior-Senior High School has reversed the procedure for the type of reports it customarily sends to parents.

For the second consecutive year the principal's office is mailing weekly reports to the parents of students whom teachers have commended for having done outstanding work. The teacher's weekly report to the principal's office includes the names of pupils who have done something particularly praiseworthy and a comment explaining definitely the nature of that work.

This system of sending complimentary reports involves no great expense, for one-cent postal cards are used to convey the information. Following is an example of one type of communication:

"I feel that you will be interested in knowing that —— (pupil's name) was commended very highly by Mr. (or Miss) —— (teacher) for outstanding work in —— (subject). He wrote a composition on a recent hunting experience which was interesting to the entire class and showed careful preparation and free expression."

Pupils of marked ability are by no means the only ones to receive the praise. In fact, the principal encourages his teachers to include in their reports the names of students having limited ability who do more than ordinarily would be expected of them. Often the gifted students do not merit praise when they do exceptionally well, for they are expected to do superior work.

The great variety of types of activities for which students are commended is shown, to some extent, by the following list which includes actual reports from teachers over a period of a month:

William Jurgens was commended by Mr. Fleischer for work in general science last week. He did very well in rebuilding a demonstration steam engine.

John McBride was commended by Miss Spevack for doing additional work in art outside of class by printing homeroom plates for honor shields.

Maude Berliner was commended by Mr. Fleischer for outstanding work in general science. She volun-

—

EDITOR'S NOTE: *"This plan of sending favorable reports to parents has proved to be successful in our school of 900 pupils," writes the author, who teaches English in the Prescott, Arizona, Junior-Senior High School. "We feel that this idea represents a very definite move from negative to positive discipline in the school."*

tarily planned and developed a good class project.

Alice Wetmore was commended by Miss Scott for fine work in her home room. Acting as homeroom gardener, she takes care of the plants regularly without having to be reminded. She also does good school work and is dependable in every way.

Sidney Meyer was commended very highly by Miss Sears, the librarian. He comes at eight o'clock every morning and helps at the desk in the library until time for home room at nine o'clock.

Morgan Browne was commended very highly by Miss Stanford for excellent work on a debate in English last week. He knew his subject well and attacked his opponent's arguments very effectively.

Sylvia Hut was commended very highly by Mr. Whittaker for outstanding work in algebra. She is doing good work herself and helps other pupils.

The fact that the report usually states definitely the particular work for which the student is complimented, adds to the effectiveness of the report. In many cases the student reported may not be the leader in any of his classes so far as making high grades are concerned, but he has certain other important virtues which are recognized. Thus the student is brought to realize that he is superior in at least one respect.

The success of this practice of reporting pupils to parents must be measured by subjective means, of course, because of the nature of the project. Unknown factors may cause one to misinterpret the results. On the whole, however, the practice is an obvious success.

After the report has arrived in the home, the pupil returns to school with a new resolve to do even better than before. If he has been a discipline problem, he probably will be much better behaved for at least the time being. If the student previously has felt that the teacher was not personally interested in him, he is very likely to change his opinion and his attitude.

A particular boy in an upper class had caused continual disturbance in his home room. One day during a group discussion on highway safety the homeroom sponsor was surprised to see this boy actively enter the discussion. He had a vital interest in safety. That week a report was sent to his parents, praising him for his part in the program. Thereafter that student was an asset to his home room.

Another boy had been enrolled as a freshman for two years without passing enough subjects to be a sophomore. At the beginning of his third year some of his teachers began to report his virtues whenever they could discover any.

Before long this pupil began to assume more than a passive interest in his studies. His attitude toward his classes and his school improved, and he passed all of his subjects—some with above-average grades. At the same time this boy changed from a degenerate loafer to a respectable school citizen.

Not only do the complimentary reports make a noticeable change in the attitude of the students, but also in the attitude of the parents. A feeling of interest in the school and its work is evinced by parents who before had only a passive interest.

Each week parents receiving reports express their appreciation to the principal or to the teacher by telephone, by letter, or by coming to the school personally. The feeling of good will between the parents and the school, although incidental, is an important outcome of this type of reporting.

A summary of the results of this practice of sending complimentary reports to parents, has convinced officials of Prescott Junior-Senior High School that the following outcomes have justified the continuation of the plan:

1. Instead of ignoring the pupil's best efforts or constantly nagging at him because of his deficiencies, the school praises him for his merits. As a result, he begins to realize that his teacher does have an interest in him as an individual. He is encouraged to do better work, he develops self-confidence, and, in turn, becomes a more desirable, better-adjusted citizen of the school.

2. These reports are helping to bring about closer coöperation between the home and the school, and are fostering a better understanding of the ideals and work of the school on the part of the parents.

Thus it is that "Johnny gets a 'break'" in our school.

THE EDUCATIONAL WHIRL

A department of satire and sharp comment

Contributors: EFFA E. PRESTON, KERMIT EBY, CECIL W. ROBERTS, FREDERICK GORDON LYLE, ROBERT B. NIXON, WALTER S. MCCOLLEY, *and* ROBERT U. RICKLEFS

Teachers don't object to supervision or to criticism, as such, but to the quality of both which they so frequently encounter. It isn't the boss, it's the bromidity. E. E. P.

Questions

I wonder why teachers are so much slower to understand the need for collective action than "uneducated" workers? I wonder why teachers earn like laborers and think like capitalists?

I wonder why the teachers and the public think chambers of commerce and manufacturing associations are socially desirable and labor unions socially reprehensible?

I wonder why we all don't understand that as soon as our organization becomes powerful, our leaders will be called "reds"? K. E.

Glossary on Pedagogy

Academic: As opposed to *Integrated*—you take your subjects straight.

Diagnosis: Your guess as to why Johnny can't learn to read. It's as good as mine.

Esprit de Corps: The reason teachers whisper the truth about education and educators instead of shouting it where it would do the most good.

Objectives: Why we do what we do, if we do anything—or things the supervisor finds in your lesson that you never dreamed of.

Orientation: Getting in tune with the infinite idiosyncrasies of a school system, or knowing your educational onions.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Among the contributors to this department are superintendents, high-school principals, and teachers. The educators whose writings appear here almost invariably have a serious point to make, but have chosen satire and humor as more effective methods of making that point. The editors of* THE CLEARING HOUSE *do not necessarily endorse the points of view expressed here.*

Panel Discussion: As many teachers as couldn't get out of it sit round a library table and read things they copied from year books the night before to inspire the other teachers who aren't listening.

Pension: A fund teachers work so hard and do without so many things to pay into that when they retire to enjoy the income from it they either die from exhaustion or find the legislators have used it up for relief work.

Radical: Any teacher who has an idea you haven't heard of. (*Conservative:* Any teacher who hasn't heard of an idea that you have.)

Special Adjustments: Getting annoying children put into the Opportunity Class.

Tax-Payer: The bogey-man Boards of Education use to frighten teachers with.

Teacher Participation: Working your head to the bone planning things for the P.T.A. and the civic celebrations of the Chamber of Commerce.

Tenure: A teacher's safeguard against the whims of an administrator, or, How School Boards Get Stuck.

Trend: The arc in the educational circle that we are approaching at the moment. E. E. P.

Jane and Elsie

"Just where is it going to stop, Jane? We started . . . just teaching our pupils. Now we have to weigh them, inspect them, make them good, and tell them the facts of life, and what to do for a living.

"What do parents do, anyway?" C. W. R.

Trainload responsibilities have been loaded on the educational wheelbarrow. R. U. R.

The General Died at Dawn

Teachers' colleges once required a course known whimsically as "General Method", which was propounded as seriously as medieval alchemists pursued their quest for the golden formula.

It seems strange that in these days when all the

essential ingredients for the ideal education are known, no one can revive the General for us so that he can tell us how to combine them.

W. S. McC.

Progressive Ed. in a Nutshell

We hear of it.
We sniff of it.
We weaken.
We climb on the band wagon.
We hear the parents told about it.
We think we have it captured, but no one told us how.
We find the children acting as if they've got it . . . or the itch.
We hear the parents criticize it.
We defend it, and thus do our duty.
We find the "boss" will not approve our idea of it on paper.
We continue to hold to our brand of it.
We continue to muddle with it.
We hear the children pan it.
We hear the big brains pan it.
We gape thru the split in the ranks and find our chief denying we ever had it.
What did we have? Just another educational rash so that teachers may whirl merrily on to another and another summer session.

R. B. N.

It's no wonder so many school superintendents envy bricklayers. A union card is more comforting than a doctor's degree and you can always throw the bricks.

E. E. P.

Taking the Composition Hurdles

"Your grammar, spelling, and punctuation is terrible."—*Our English teacher criticizes a pupil theme.*

"Through our program of Health and Physical Education with its objectives and methods strives to meet the needs of the boy's and girls today."—*From a report of the Supervisor of Physical Education.*

"After two years operation and study of the (so called) Pre-Vocational Course, established for the purpose of affording that group of students who for some reason were out of adjustment with the regular courses, works well and should be continued."—*From a principal's annual report to his superintendent.*

F. G. L.

How Teach Justice?

I've discovered: That it is much safer to discuss the abstract ideas of justice, than it is to give them specific meaning.

1. You see, we all believe in justice for the unemployed; what we disagree on is how much actual cash is needed to keep body and soul together.

2. You see, we all believe in a living wage; what we disagree on is how much a living wage is.

3. You see, we all believe in universal brotherhood—excepting for Negroes and Jews, of course, and our enemies in war time.

4. You see, we all are opposed to the spoils system—except occasionally when it helps us.

Why is it?

K. E.

Pre-Obituary

The best way to kill a good idea is to formalize it.
The best way to bury one is to institutionalize it.
"Guidance" is the current good idea. Watch it grow and go.

C. W. R.

Crazy with Puppets

One of the things which gives the term "progressive" education so many of the delightful qualities of a pain in the neck is the idiocies which are practiced in its name.

For instance there is the young school executive of advanced ideas who went to seed on the subject of teaching by the use of puppets. History with puppets, arithmetic with puppets, geography with puppets, art with puppets, English with puppets, music with puppets.

The last phrase probably should be "crazy with puppets". The sugar coating might conceivably become worse than the pill.

W. S. McC.

Many teachers still teach government by having their pupils memorize governmental organizations. Memorizing the bones of the body didn't help me to understand human nature!

K. E.

Conventions Are Blooming

If teachers are to teach Democracy in an atmosphere of democracy, why can't their conventions be planned and governed accordingly? Why can't teachers select the speakers they wish to have on *their* program; the things *they* wish to hear discussed;

(Continued on page 576)

A Beehive of Activity Is the Patrick Henry Junior High School

PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

By
JESSE G. FOX *and* EMANUEL E. MARGOLIES

WHEN THE Photography Club of Patrick Henry Junior High School was first organized, in 1935, its equipment consisted of several small trays, five M. Q. tubes, one pound of Hypo, and a package of printing paper. Today, the club turns out all the graduation pictures, prints photos for magazine publication, and is now preparing a motion picture of school life.

Some of the equipment needed for this work was obtained by money earned through the developing and printing of pictures for the student body and the faculty. Much of it was constructed by various groups of boys during their regular shop periods. This "home-made" equipment includes an enlarger, a printing box, developing tanks, an easel, light reflectors, and other smaller items.

At 2:10 P.M. every Monday afternoon, 31 boys pour into the fourth-floor science room, take their seats, and with eager impatience await the knock of the gavel. Fifteen minutes later, the business part of the meeting over, 31 boys jump from their seats and hurry to their assignments.

A half dozen enter the supply closet to develop their films. There is no source of light in the closet so a guard is posted outside the door to tap off the minutes. With the aid of this human timepiece and a thermometer, the boys process their films. A clothing closet serves for a second darkroom. The windows have been darkened with wrapping paper and a small table has been placed in the corner. A ceiling light plus an extension cord provides current. This is the printing and enlarging room. Developing out a crisp print or a clear enlargement is a thrilling experience. This closet is always crowded.

At the sink, a boy is carefully rinsing some pictures; another painstakingly trims his prints and decorates them with a decollette edge. Three boys hold shining ferrotypes close to the warm radiators. They will be able to take their pictures home dry and glossy before the meeting is adjourned at 3:10. Several lads are meticulously coloring their enlargements with transparent oils. Another member labors over a cardboard embossment on which he mounts an attractively colored print. Others are weighing out chemicals and preparing stock solutions for the next meeting.

On special occasions, parental consent slips enable the whole club to adjourn to the nearby park for an orgy of picture taking. Many cameras will be seen; a few with fair lenses, but most of them of inferior grade. Nevertheless, many surprisingly good pictures have been taken with box cameras.

The Bird Sanctuary is a favorite spot for "shooting" since here roam many small animals as well as a variety of birds with colorful plumage. The fountain, the lake, the ballfields and surrounding foliage offer

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The activity discussed in this article is reported a decided success by the authors. The profit made by the club on recent graduation photographs will be used to make a moving picture of school life. Mr. Fox is principal, and Mr. Margolies is director of the Photography Club, of the Patrick Henry Junior High School, New York City.*

many problems in composition and exposure.

From time to time, committees (boys with the faster cameras) are assigned to visit other clubs in the school building in order to obtain a pictorial record of progress in these clubs, for inclusion in the school publication.

Graduation time finds the clubroom a beehive of activity. The club director's plate camera is borrowed and all graduation classes line up in the school yard where they are seated and photographed. The privilege of handling this difficult assignment is given to a member who has been with the club for several terms and is quite familiar with the proper manipulation of the more complicated apparatus to be employed. He is assisted by a group of advanced members.

They arrange for the sitting, check exposure time for the camera operator, assist him with the plates, and run upstairs to the darkroom in between pictures, in order to develop one or two films to check on the resulting negatives. Thus they economize on materials as well as upon the time of the students who are posing.

The committee later develops the films, dries them near a burner or radiator, and displays sample enlargements the very same afternoon. Orders are taken and as many as 150 prints, ranging in size from 8 x 10 inches to 11 x 14 inches, are carefully prepared, thoroughly washed, dried, flattened, and sold.

The profit from the most recent graduation job will be used in the making of a motion picture concerning life at the school. At times when they are not engaged in studies, the students will act for the desired scenes.

The club will direct the acting, write the scenario, and do the technical work. One committee will design the sets; another will arrange for lighting; a third will operate the camera; a fourth will edit and splice the film after it is processed. Several boys with particular artistic ability will embellish the reel with interesting titles, and the grand finale shall be the projection in the auditorium before the whole student body.

Every six months, the Photography Club displays some of its work at the regular exhibition of school club projects. It will compete for the prizes offered by the American Institute at the first scholastic "Salon of Photography" to be held at the American Museum of Natural History on May 22. Two or three club members have already won prizes in the occasional contests conducted by newspapers and magazines.

It will be noticed that no provision is made for formal instruction in the conduct of the meeting of the club. A clubroom is no place for formal instruction. It is a place for happy, constructive activity under the guidance of a teacher who can forget that he is in a classroom. The club sponsor demonstrates when necessary. The boys imitate and often innovate.

It is not always the boy with the high I.Q. who excels as a photographer. Many students with lower than average mentality have become fair technicians. Those students who thirst for more knowledge concerning the chemistry and physics of the photographic processes are encouraged to read and report on books in the field. Many members are so fascinated with the mechanics of photography that they are too busy to worry about theory. All enjoy the club work and the waiting list is long indeed.

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The Chicago Teachers Union has the largest membership of any teachers union in the United States. Kermit Eby, executive secretary of the Chicago Teachers Union, announced on April 4 a total membership of 7,800. New York City has the second largest teachers union in this country, and that of Cleveland is third.

The Place of High-School MATHEMATICS

By
THOMAS B. PORTWOOD

IN ATTEMPTING to discuss the problem of high-school mathematics, it is necessary to think of some of the changes that have taken place in the schools themselves.

In the first place, the high school has ceased to be a highly selective institution and has become more of an all-inclusive institution. During the last 25 years or so, the enrollment of the high school has increased about ten to fifteen fold. We no longer have a relatively small number of the academic select but rather more of a cross section of American youth with all of the varying abilities, backgrounds, and other differences naturally found in such a group in any part of the United States.

In an effort to offer a worthwhile program to the great number of students, the high school has been undergoing many changes as to philosophy, curriculum and general procedure. In general, these changes have been in the direction of doing away with the so-called single-track curriculum and the development of the elective process whereby the student may choose, within certain limits, what he wants to study. This choosing process always brings a clash of the vested interests of the academic world. Each interest such as the language group, the science group, the English group, or the math group is sure that the elective principle is all right so long as it doesn't give to the student the privilege of coming out with a bona fide high-school diploma without having two or three units in that particular subject field. In short, we all believe in a core curriculum provided *our* subject is the core. (Let the other fellow offer the electives; my subject should be required of every student in the school.)

In considering a program of mathematics for the high school one must keep in mind two things: In the first place the educational purpose underlying the school; and in the second place, the real aims of mathematics as taught in the school.

The familiar statement of Dr. Briggs known as the golden rule of secondary education is probably as accurate a statement of what the high school is trying to do as has been made. Briggs said that the purpose of the school is: "To teach children to do better those desirable things that they are going to do anyway; to lead them to higher types of activity; to make these higher types desirable and to an extent attainable." So to be able to determine the proper place of mathematics in any school founded on a philosophy such as Briggs proposed it becomes necessary to state the aim of mathe-

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The title of this article doesn't tell the whole story, as Mr. Portwood is concerned primarily with "putting high-school mathematics in its place". And that place, he holds, is not on the study card of pupils who have no talent for mathematics, and who will never have a use for algebra and geometry. Mr. Portwood offers many concrete facts and summaries of investigations which indicate that high intelligence and high mathematics ability are not Siamese twins, and that pupils who are weak in high-school mathematics can be good college timber. The author is assistant superintendent of schools of San Antonio, Texas, in charge of secondary education.*

matics to show what we are trying to do.

The report of the National Committee on Mathematics Requirements lists three fundamental aims: (1) the practical aim; (2) the disciplinary aims; (3) the cultural aim.

The practical aim means the command of the fundamental processes that one is apt to need, and this fits very well with Briggs' Golden Rule of teaching the pupil to do better those desirable things that he is going to do anyway. However, when we come to the disciplinary aim we find ourselves on controversial ground.

I think most psychologists now agree that under favorable conditions there may be transfer of training at least to some degree and that such transfer is based upon identical elements being present. It seems, however, that too much value is apt to be attached to the so-called disciplinary power of mathematical training. The following statement taken from a recent publication indicates that over-emphasis can be found:

"The seeking of relations and their precise expression, an attitude of inquiry, a desire to understand, concentration and persistence, a love for precision, accuracy, thoroughness and clearness, and a distaste for vagueness and incompleteness are some of the claims made for mathematics. Certainly this is a large order to expect as a by-product when some of our high-school pupils who do not have any real ability in the subject are exposed to algebra, geometry, or trigonometry. It is doubtful if any real good results unless there is sufficient ability to generate interest."

The cultural aims of mathematics are still more difficult to define. Such extravagant claims as appreciation of the beauty of geometrical forms, and ideals of perfection as to logical forms are found. Certainly the cultural values may be had without the slavish mastery of the intricate processes of mathematics. There are certainly various other avenues of approach to beauty and perfection and balance and logical thought than the avenue of mathematics as such. For those who have not the particular ability to travel the mathematics road, it would seem the better part of wisdom to choose another path.

Schorling in his booklet on the teaching of mathematics says in discussing transfer of training:

"The acceptance of this doctrine does not mean that pupils should be taught disagreeable and difficult tasks. The world offers an infinite number of things to be learned from which a given individual must make a selection. If the procedures used in reflective thinking are to be mastered how much more sensible it is to choose for a given individual tasks which are not only interesting to him but useful."

This brings us to the question of mathematics and college entrance requirements, which is always a great problem in the high school.

We all know that the content of high-school mathematics is determined very largely by what the colleges demand. We also know that most colleges think that the high school is doing a rather poor job of preparing students in the field of mathematics. We also know that most high schools think that the colleges are doing a rather poor job of teaching students after they get them from the high school. Perhaps each of these groups is not entirely correct in what it thinks but we can get some light from certain studies which have been made within the last two or three years.

Let us mention first a report from the department of Psychology at Dartmouth College. This investigation tended to show that all students who had a high rank in mathematical ability also had a high rank in intelligence, but that some students whose mathematical ability was low also ranked high in intelligence. In other words, it is possible to be intelligent and not be gifted in mathematics. I have no doubt that some lovers of mathematics seriously question this. But if such a conclusion can be substantiated, it should mean a radical change

in college entrance requirements in the field of mathematics.

If a student is intelligent and perhaps gifted in other lines why should he be forced to attempt to master mathematics for which he has no ability or interest? But there are many who do not believe that a student can be good college timber and be weak in mathematical ability.

We can get some light on this problem from the recent Pennsylvania study. This study was reported by Dr. Walter A. Jessup in the Educational Record of January 1936. This study covers a period of some seven years and records have been made of some 30,000 students. Intensive and comprehensive tests were administered to both high school and college students with the result that some rather startling and interesting things were discovered.

In the first place it was discovered that there is no actual standard for achievement in college. College A was found to differ from College B as much as 150 per cent on median performance. Yet both colleges were supposed to have approximately the same standard of academic achievement. The study also reveals some interesting things with regard to achievement of high-school pupils and of college students. The identical test was given to over 5,000 college sophomores and to 1500 high-school seniors. It was found that one-fourth of the high-school students outranked the average college sophomore. Ten per cent of the high school students ranked higher than the average for the senior class of the college.

One college in Pennsylvania was tested and studied in an effort to determine the extent of "enduring knowledge" in the freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior classes. Great overlapping was found. In fact, had the college decided to graduate on what students know rather than on the number of credits each one had, the graduating class would have been made up as follows: 33 per cent Seniors; 25 per cent Juniors; 23 per cent Sophomores; and 19 per cent Freshmen. These figures are appropriate.

In discussing this study Dr. Jessup uses the term "enduring knowledge". He means by that certain fundamental learning which has meaning for the student and which is so related to other things that the student can make connections and really use such knowledge. "Enduring knowledge" is not the ability to remember certain isolated facts and to be able to reproduce them. Such enduring knowledge is supposed to be the result of our classroom rituals and teaching procedures both in high school and college.

If we are to believe the findings of the Pennsylvania study, many of our ideas regarding the value of classroom instruction are wrong. I quote Dr. Jessup on this point. He says: "With our present system of educational organization we unconsciously overemphasize many of the mechanical features of schooling, such as length of term, length of hour, number of recitations, number of courses, and other mechanical features which go to make up a unit of credit. We give examinations in the schools but these examinations are so made as to conceal rather than reveal differences. We ignore the most important thing, which is the vital variation of one student from another. The difference in the students' 'enduring knowledge' should condition every act of the teacher."

We may be approaching a day when high schools and colleges will cease to worry so much about formal requirements and begin to think about students in terms of what each can do. This does not mean that scholarship is being lowered or standards of achievement lowered. It may mean that those who cannot master higher mathematics and will never use it will be allowed to spend their time at something else with the full assurance of being able to enter college and there pursue those interests and abilities which they possess.

The purpose of the school should be to discover differences and to attempt to develop each student as much unlike the oth-

ers as he naturally is rather than to attempt to develop students by groups according to inflexible requirements.

The average high school or college has made little effort to adjust to individual student need. One of the chief obstacles in the way of the testing program in Pennsylvania was the fact that many colleges refused to give up two days a year for some three years from classroom teaching. They felt that they needed the two days to cover certain imaginary academic ground.

In this connection I am reminded of the teacher of American History who vigorously objected to stopping—as she put it—the teaching of history while her class listened by radio to Col. Charles A. Lindbergh testifying before Congress. We have become too much the slaves of certain set procedures, certain sacred subjects, and above all else, classroom rituals.

But I want to stay fairly close at least to the problem of high school mathematics. The report of the committee on college freshmen for the Southern Association had this to say about two years ago. "From this study one can't help but raise the question as to why failure in mathematics is out of all proportion to other subjects. Is mathematics a more difficult subject? Is it taken by poor students? Is it poorly taught or is it required and hence taken by many who have no ability for it or interest in it?"

The report shows that almost twenty per cent of all freshmen taking mathematics failed, which rate is much higher than for any other subject field.

It is possible that many students are attempting mathematics who have no real ability in the subject and who study only because of certain rigid requirements based on tradition rather than pupil need.

Since there is evidence that mathematical ability is not necessarily a condition for general intelligence, it would appear that college entrance requirements should be based primarily on the special training required for successful study of courses to be pursued in college. This certainly can never mean that every student must be trained in the same way. The college entrance examination board has made some progress in the solution of this problem by dividing students into three classes:

1. Those who do not expect to study any mathematics or natural science in college.
2. Those who expect to study only minimum college requirements in the fields of natural science or mathematics.
3. Those who expect to do graduate work in science or mathematics.

The examination for those who do not expect to pursue mathematics in college is of course quite different from that given to those who do expect to take mathematics in college. This is quite a progressive step coming from a body that is noted for holding to formal and rigid requirements and the same requirements for all.

Such requirements may be straws in the wind indicating that even our colleges are beginning to make adjustments so as to fit college experience to high-school experience and to gear both to ability and interests. To the high school boy or girl who can master mathematics and who sincerely likes the subject I would say more power to him. I want to be able to say the same thing to all boys and girls who show ability in other fields of study.

Perhaps the college and the university should also be interested in teaching all boys and girls to do better those desirable things that they are going to do anyway.

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Freshman English students of a certain high school in Ohio wrote George Bernard Shaw for his autograph. He answered that "a school which teaches children to make nuisances of themselves by collecting autographs should be burned to the ground."

Many of the "lowest third" of our graduates are

COLLEGE MATERIAL

By W. E. TREBILCOCK

A COMBINATION of circumstances made it desirable in 1924 to start the keeping of a systematic and comprehensive record of the success our high-school graduates were attaining in their first semester in college.

By that year school authorities in various places had announced in impressive numbers higher requirements which their high-school graduates had to meet in order to obtain a recommendation to college; reports were current—some of them well founded—that some of the higher institutions were going to gather and publish statistics from time to time showing the performance of graduates of the various high schools in their first college semester; the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools was inaugurating a study which was designed in part to reveal how well its member secondary schools were performing their college preparatory function as revealed by college records.

It was a foregone conclusion that some school men interested in publicity, whose high-school graduates, in any given report, might have acquitted themselves creditably, would make public the report, emphasizing the point by citing other schools whose graduates did not show up so well in the same report.

It was uncertain what would constitute success for the purpose of these reports—whether percentage of failure alone would be the test, for example, or whether the distribution of grades received would determine it, or whether, in the latter case, the rank of students in their high-school graduating classes would receive recognition. It is apparent that the results of no one year can be relied on as evidence of the success with which individual schools prepare for college, and that figures issued by a single higher institution are not to be relied on as typical of the work of the individual high schools. Obviously, an accurate revelation depends on data which cover a period of years and which are complete for all graduates and all institutions they attend.

Because of the scope of its membership, the North Central Association's summary of data for a particular year, in contrast to its figures for a particular high school, may be regarded as typical and hence may serve as a measure against which each school may judge itself when its figures cover a sufficiently long period to be representative.

The immediate problem at Calumet, however, in 1924, concerned the advisability of recommending to the board of education the adoption of a rule which would make a grade above the minimum passing one a prerequisite for recommendation to college. Such a recommendation would not only be counter to past practice but counter to the beliefs of the school administrators who hold that colleges themselves should set

EDITOR'S NOTE: *"For many high-school graduates there is no adequate test of fitness for college except the actual attempt to carry college work," is one of the author's five conclusions based upon the records of Calumet High School graduates in college. These records, kept over a period of years, show that the "lowest third" of the high-school graduates do much better in college than many colleges might like to admit. The author is superintendent of schools in Calumet, Michigan.*

their standards of admission and themselves accept the responsibility of rejecting applicants.

It is a momentous matter forever to bar a youth from trying college, and the unreliability of a high-school average for the purpose is notorious. Let those who will, assume that responsibility. Calumet's policy is to get into college—some college—every student who seeks to enter. Often students cannot get into the colleges of their choice, but it is the business of the high-school principal to find colleges they can enter. We have yet to experience our first failure to get a student into an accredited higher institution.

Common prudence, however, requires that an eye be had to the publication of data which might be interpreted as ranking schools on the basis of their college preparatory efficiency, unless the data are truly comparable—and school policy in making recommendations to colleges is an important factor in comparability. Therefore, there was begun in 1924 the yearly practice of tabulating complete data on the performance of our graduates in their first college term.

In 1919 data had been assembled which covered the school years 1914-1915 through 1918-1919 for students entering four-year institutions only. Not all institutions have made regular reports back to the high schools, and for that reason our data for the years 1919-1924 are not quite complete. Starting with the 1924-1925 session, however, our data include the first-term records of every graduate who attended an institution of collegiate rank.

Of the 651 students whose grades were received in the period 1914-1937, 167 attended western universities; 15, eastern universities and colleges; 7, western colleges for women; 91, denominational and municipal colleges; 161, normal schools and teachers' colleges; 95, junior colleges; and 115, technical schools and state colleges.

Our data show by years the number of hours of work carried, the number of hours graded A, B, etc., and the percentage of the total hours carried graded A, B, etc. Variation in the percentages from year to year is to be expected. The study made by the North Central Association as of 1928-1929 shows that graduates of Michigan high schools attending college that year had a failing rate in terms of hours of 7.6 per cent while the average for the entire membership of the Association was 9.4 per cent. The Calumet twenty-three year average is 3.9 per cent and the yearly range was from zero to 8.2 per cent.

Our data also cover the rank in their high school classes of the students who went to college, the student failing rate, and the high-school rank of students failing. For this purpose, a student is classified as failing if he received a failing grade in any course. Because the University of Michigan and a number of other institutions limited admission to those who ranked above the lowest third of their high-school classes, high school rank was determined by that third of his class the student's four-year average placed him in.

The North Central Association study as of 1928-1929 credited Michigan with a student failing rate of 21.5 per cent and gave the average for the entire Association as 25.7 per cent.

The records of our school show the following: 651 students entered college for the first time and remained for at least one term; 286 of these—or 43.9%—ranked in the highest third of their high-school class; 213, or 32.7%, ranked in the middle third; and 152, or 23.3%, ranked in the lowest third.

Of the 651 students, 81, or 12.4%, failed at least one course. Of the 81 failing, 7 ranked in the highest third of their graduating class, and constituted 2.4% of the total number of "highest third" students entering college; 33, or 5.1%, of the "middle third" students failed, as did 41, or 26.3%, of the "lowest third" students. The number of "highest third" students failing was 8.6% of the total number of students failing; the

SUMMARY OF COLLEGE GRADES RECEIVED BY THE RESPECTIVE THIRDS

	Total No. Hours Carried	*Hrs. of A* (%)	*Hrs. of B* (%)	*Hrs. of C* (%)	*Hrs. of D* (%)	*Hrs. of E* (%)
Highest Third	4362	22.5	38.9	31.9	6.1	.5
Middle Third	3100	7.3	27.8	44.6	16.2	4.1
Lowest Third	2003	4.1	24.2	44.1	16.3	10.7

"middle thirds" constituted 40.7% of the total number of students failing, and the "lowest thirds" constituted 50.6%.

It is to be observed that close to a fourth of the students entering college were in the lowest third of their high-school classes and hence were presumably poor college risks. That a larger per cent of this group would fail than of either of the others was to be expected—but that the rate should be roughly one student in four was much better than was to be expected, as reference to the previously mentioned North Central Association average of 25.7% will evidence.

Breaking down our data so as to distribute the college grades received in accordance with the high-school rank of the recipients, the following results were obtained: Courses totalling 1290 hours were graded A. Of these, 982 hours—76.1% of the total graded A—were earned by those in the highest third of their high school class, 226 hours, or 17.5% of the A total, earned by those in the middle third, and 82 hours, or 6.4% of the A total, by those in the lowest third.

In the accompanying table is set forth a summary which portrays in convenient fashion the composite performance of students in the respective thirds of their high-school classes. It reveals what per cent of the total hours carried by each third were graded A, B, etc. Commenting only on the figures for the lowest third, it appears that 28% of the grades were above average, 44% average, and 27% below average. The failing rate of 10.7% for this group must be regarded as moderate.

Observations:

1. Raising the requirements necessary to obtain a recommendation to college is not warranted in the light of the past and current performance of our graduates.

2. Colleges are right in anticipating that the most unsatisfactory results will come from students of low rank in high school.

3. Colleges which impose an admission standard of scholarship considerably above a minimum passing grade are probably excluding students who are capable of satisfactory work.

4. Colleges which take students without regard to their high-school rank are performing a real educational service in many cases, inasmuch as they open the door of opportunity to many who otherwise would find themselves cut off from a college career. These students can either remain and graduate from such institutions or, on establishing their ability to do college work, can transfer to the very institutions which would not admit them in the first instance.

5. While it is wasteful and otherwise undesirable to have the unfit in college, it is also wasteful and otherwise undesirable to keep the fit out of college. For many students there is no adequate test of fitness except the actual attempt to carry college work.

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In Russia, according to government statistics, 90 per cent of the Soviet citizens are literate as against 25 per cent in 1897.—*The World Almanac*, 1937.

A survey of the ideas and methods used by Westchester County teachers of

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

By GWENDOLEN GLENDENNING *and* WINNETTE CURTIS

THE FOREIGN-LANGUAGE group of the curriculum-study committee appointed by the Westchester County Teachers' Association in New York State is prepared to take readers of THE CLEARING HOUSE on a brief tour of the foreign-language classes of the county, with a view to observing which of the teaching methods advocated for adoption in recent years are actually being employed, and to what extent they are found satisfactory.

Teachers are constantly hearing and reading—in conferences, courses, and professional publications—what they should be doing or what they might be doing to improve their teaching. We hope it will be beneficial to learn what is actually being done and proving generally satisfactory in some schools.

Although language teaching in New York State is, to a considerable degree, standardized by the requirements of the state syllabus, and although Westchester schools on the whole are favored by more generous financial support than the average for the entire country, our study showed a surprising variation in aims and in the methods utilized to achieve these aims. Many of the teachers reporting stated frankly that their aim was to meet the requirements of the syllabus. In other cases the syllabus requirements were very evidently minimum essentials, and the courses were enriched in a variety of ways, which showed that a syllabus is not necessarily an impassible barrier.

Our information was obtained by two questionnaires, and the answers were tabulated by members of the committee. An exceptional degree of coöperation was shown. Answers to the first questionnaire were promptly received from fifty-seven of the fifty-nine junior and senior high schools in the country, and seventy-five per cent of these schools answered the second, which was more detailed.

The first questionnaire, which was sent to principals, asked for total registration in their schools, and for registration by classes, in Latin, French, German, Spanish, Italian, and General Language. Due to the fact that half the school systems of the county are organized on the six year high-school plan, and that the committee neglected to ask these schools for separate registration figures for their junior- and senior-high-school divisions, percentages would have no comparative value. Here are the approximate registration figures for each language, out of a total registration of 33,500 for all classes in grades 7 to 12:

Latin	French	German	Spanish
6400	7500	900	1500

Italian	General Language
900	750

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Miss Glendenning is chairman, and Miss Curtis a member, of the Foreign Language Group of the Westchester Curriculum Study Committee. The authors of this article teach foreign languages in the Scarsdale High School, Scarsdale, New York. This article, which is based upon a survey of the foreign-language teaching methods and ideas now being used in the county, offers our readers an opportunity to participate in the findings of the investigation.*

The second questionnaire, sent to a teacher in each school, and filled out for each language, asked for: (1) A statement of aims; (2) names of grammars and readers used during each year, and the approximate number of pages read; (3) reactions to several practices (to be stated later); and (4) the extent of use of certain devices for enlivening the study of languages.

We shall not discuss here the books used or the number of pages read. Tabulations of these will be made later, and can be consulted by those interested. We shall also leave out all discussion of Regents examinations, which have only regional interest, and of general language classes, which seem not yet to be sufficiently standardized or understood to warrant discussion in this article.

We shall first consider briefly some of the aims mentioned for Latin and for the modern languages. We shall then discuss the reactions to questions regarding the time for beginning a language, prognostic tests, objective tests, and classes for pupils of low ability. Then we shall present some of the ideas contributed which the committee feel to be worthy of more general use.

The aims expressed by the Latin teachers ranged from the ultra-conservative "development of reasoning power" to the more modern "ability to understand the nature and growth of modern institutions, practices and conventions, by comparison with their ancient origins". That most teachers are endeavoring to make Latin of functional importance to their pupils is shown by the fact that grammar is emphasized for its value in improving English grammar fully as much as for the sake of Latin itself; vocabulary is stressed as an aid to the enlargement of English vocabulary; and translation for its value in expressing ideas concisely in good, idiomatic English.

In modern languages there seemed to be a decided trend toward a greater emphasis on ability to speak the language, with the idea that this gives great personal satisfaction and is one more basis for the friendly understanding between nations so much needed at present. The aim of attaining a larger range of vocabulary and a greater consciousness of the power of words was also expressed. Much was said about education for leisure time and the cultural development of the individual, leading to aesthetic appreciation and a larger mental life.

Now we come to the reactions of teachers to the topics mentioned, with an occasional statement of practices:

Time to begin a language. For Latin, ninth grade was favored by a majority, but a few schools wanted it begun in the eighth grade. One school even suggested that it be taken up in the elementary grades. Actually, there are seven systems where it is taught in the eighth grade and one where it is begun in the seventh.

Ten schools felt that modern languages should be begun in tenth grade only. There were a few advocates for beginning them in the eighth or ninth grades, and more who wanted them begun as early as possible, but fifteen teachers stated definitely that they should be begun in the seventh grade.

This falls in line with the aim of greater speaking ability, and is interesting from another angle, in view of the fact that there are only four public schools in the county in which seventh-grade pupils may take a modern language. This language in every case is French, with a small additional class in Spanish in one school.

Prognostic tests. There are only three schools in the county using prognostic tests, and they did not name the tests used. Most teachers seemed to feel that they might be good in some schools, but that they themselves had not enough faith in them to try them. Some felt that a general language course, or any language given in junior high school, could be used to weed out those who would not be benefited by taking a language. Others were of the opinion that study of a pupil's previous record, coupled with a reading test such as the Traxler, would serve the same purpose.

One member of the committee felt strongly that, for modern languages at least, a pupil who is naturally interested in other people, and who has a lively imagination, a good ear and good English diction, the habit of giving attention to details, and a great desire to learn a foreign language, will overcome such handicaps as a rather low I.Q. and a rather poor reading ability. A good student might make an effort on a prognostic test because it was something new and temporary, and still not do well in the language in class.

Objective tests. There was no wide expression of opinion on the objective tests now in use, such as the Coöperative Tests. While two or three teachers favored them as a means of standardization and as being easy to score, others pointed out that they were not a real test of language sense or the power of expression, and that, if used too much, they would put the emphasis on a passive rather than an active knowledge of a language.

Classes for pupils of low ability. There was, perhaps, more disagreement on this subject than on any other. Any such discussion is complicated in New York State by the Regents examinations. The classes for pupils of low ability would, of course, have no Regents, and some think this would make too sharp a distinction between students.

Others feel that students not capable of keeping up with the regular classes should not be taking a language at all—that it is an "attempt to educate the non-educable".

Nevertheless, many feel that a combination reading-conversation-civilization course would be of value to a great many pupils who are made to suffer quite unnecessarily by continued grammar tests. These classes are operating successfully in the schools of one city in this county.

Now come the suggestions, which we hope may prove of use to other language teachers:

In Latin, a variety of devices were suggested, particularly in connection with the study of Roman history and customs. One teacher uses variable assignments to suit the interests of individual pupils. Another has topical assignments for the entire class, and uses discussion and debates, in which comparisons with modern events are emphasized.

One teacher reports correlation with the music department, in the form of Latin songs sung by the glee clubs, while another reports that her pupils translate Latin inscriptions or terms used in other subjects. Several teachers refer briefly to correlations with other languages, history, and art.

Apparently there are few Latin clubs, but at least one flourishes. It holds regular meetings and an annual banquet, Roman style. Another school stages a Saturnalia just before the holidays. Another presents an assembly program and an exhibition of a large number of projects, models, scrap-books and posters.

Some of the ideas suggested by modern language teachers could be carried out in many schools. Others require equipment which could not be had in all schools, and still others are possible only in a metropolitan area. We are listing examples of each kind.

One way of teaching the civilization of the country whose language is being studied sounds as if it might be feasible in any school. Every month, in second- and third-year French, each student receives a mimeographed list of questions in the foreign language, about certain aspects of France (geography, history, government, and so on). These must be put in his notebook, looked up, and answered by the end of the month. Students in many schools also keep up with the current events of the country whose language they are studying by reading the little newspapers published for classroom use.

Correspondence with boys and girls of the foreign country is another possibility open to everyone. In many schools the opportunity for this is given regularly. A few

schools found that it did not work out well, but the committee knows of at least one bureau that has proved satisfactory.

There are many language clubs in the county. Whether or not a club flourishes seems to depend on the enthusiasm and the free time of its members. In one school the club meets every other week and tea is always served as an incentive to conversation. Before the tea, games are played or charades given. Once a year there is a play, and at another meeting there is a Bridge, where the vocabulary needed is provided on a mimeographed sheet for each person. Occasionally foreigners speak to the club. Some clubs have newspapers which they publish. Some exchange programs with other schools. One school has an alumni language club which gives a prize each year to the senior who does outstanding work in the language. Some prepare programs for assemblies. They work out songs, with the help of the music department, and make costumes of the provinces of the foreign land.

Another form of entertainment in favor, whether for clubs or for classes, is the puppet show. A Westchester County teacher has published a little book explaining the making of puppets and a puppet theatre, and including little plays which have proven successful. Besides being fun, this work is a great aid to pronunciation and fluency and well worth the time spent on it.

Correlation with other departments of the school has been mentioned in connection with school assemblies. The art department can also help out with the puppets. In one school last year, junior-high art pupils made marionnettes and a theatre, and gave a play which senior high pupils had written. In some schools language teachers help members of the music classes in their pronunciation of songs in a foreign language. In several schools translations made by pupils in foreign language classes are marked by English teachers.

Schools which are fortunate enough to have a balopticon, a good victrola, and a recording machine are able to help their pupils greatly. The balopticon, in addition to its use in several schools for showing pictures of France and French life, is used in one school for vocabulary building. Pictures from magazines, advertisements, and cartoons, if carefully selected, can be of great aid in giving a vocabulary that is easily remembered.

Victrola records are used in some schools for the teaching of pronunciation, for familiarizing the student with the music of the country studied, and for entertaining him while at the same time training his ear.

One school makes recordings of each student's pronunciation in his third and fourth years in a language. The pupil reads a passage that he has prepared or a poem that he has memorized. These records are played in class and criticized.

Schools which are near a large city, or a center where there is much interest in the foreign language, are also fortunate. Nearly all the schools in the county reported field trips to New York. There were visits to boats, foreign restaurants, foreign films, art museums, and so on. In several communities the Women's Club brings foreign language films to the local moving-picture house. These films are also shown in some schools. Two schools reported a series of lectures to third- and fourth-year students by foreigners who spoke in their native tongue.

There is one more suggestion which the committee would like to make. One of the teachers' foreign language groups in the county runs a competitive examination each spring. It is open to third-year and fourth-year students and to those who have studied in the foreign country. At the written examination the three groups mentioned are given different topics. Those who pass the written examination are allowed to take orals a month later. Many people have been kind enough to give medals for presentation to those who pass with credit in each group, and the students seem very proud to win them.

An Art Entertainment Helped Us to Buy
BEAUTIFUL PICTURES

By ROY E. ABBEY

ART APPRECIATION has been taught in our school for several years. In addition, we have endeavored to make our rooms and corridors attractive with beautiful pictures, so that our children may appreciate more keenly the works of famous and well-known artists. But the buying of these pictures involves money, and this is a problem in any public school.

The procedure which has usually been followed by schools in bringing Art Exhibits to a community has been to place the exhibit in a room, auditorium, or gymnasium, and admit only those people who pay a stipulated fee to see it. This means that only a small percentage of the school population will avail themselves of this sort of an opportunity to see fine works of art. Conscious of this fact, we used the following plan with our last exhibit:

We secured an exhibit of 150 well-known pictures. These pictures were hung in our corridors for one week, where the entire student body could see them as much as they cared to. The art classes studied them throughout the week. The children of our contributing elementary schools were invited in to see and study the pictures without any charge. Thus, the children of a large portion of our city were given an opportunity to see these pictures.

On Friday evening of the exhibit week the school put on a program of posed "living" pictures. This program was the result of the work done by the assembly director and the music teacher in collaboration with the art and homemaking departments. Each homeroom in the building was asked to select and "pose" one picture. The pupils who were not chosen for the actual portrayal of the picture helped to assemble the costumes and other materials needed for the portrayal.

The children of the entire school were made thoroughly conscious of the art exhibit and felt that they were having a real part in making the thing a success. The Student Council took charge of the sale of tickets, which again, of course, touched every homeroom in the building. The parents came to see the pictures, and then went to the auditorium for the entertainment.

The program, which follows, included twenty-one tableaux, each of which "reproduced" a picture in the exhibit. Each tableau was preceded by a short talk from one of the homeroom pupils, who mentioned the conditions under which the picture to be "posed" was painted, perhaps the reason for its existence, its permanent location, and some information about the artist's life and other paintings. A selection in music, song, or verse which bore out the theme of the picture accompanied each portrayal:

I. Orchestra
   March Romaine
II. Prologue
   Living pictures interpreted in Music and Verse

EDITOR'S NOTE: *During a one-week exhibit of well-known pictures at the Oneida Junior High School, Schenectady, New York, an evening entertainment was held of "living" pictures and music that fitted the themes of the pictures. The fund thus raised bought a number of pictures for the classrooms and corridors, reports the author, who is principal of the school.*

III. "Age of Innocence" (Reynolds)
Glee Club—"Sweet Miss Mary"
IV. "The Angelus" (Millet)
Piano and Violin—"Simple Aveu"
V. "Spanish Dancers" (Genth)
Banjo Trio—"Don Juan Serenade"
VI. "Girl with Cherries" (Russell)
Orchestra—Waltz
VII. "Song of the Lark" (Breton)
Glee Club—"Song of the Lark"
VIII. "The Gleaners" (Millet)
Reading—"The Solitary Reaper"
(There were 15 similar additional numbers.)

The entire project affected almost every pupil and teacher in some way. There was coöperation from the Homemaking, the Industrial Arts, the Physical Education, the Art and the Music Departments. An unusual amount of interest was aroused not only in the school but also in the community, and last of all, a considerable sum of money was realized with which to buy beautiful pictures—a lasting memorial to the fine work done by the entire school.

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Vocabulary Hints for Educators

By P. A. KNOWLTON

Scope and sequence, scope and sequence!
Use the phrase with zest and frequence
If you want a reputation
As a wiz in education.

Cognoscenti think *appraisal*
Sounds inelegant and nasal.
Scholars say *evaluation*
For its classy connotation.

Area, once geographic,
Now's a word in which to traffic.
With it you can show your clients
You have mastered social science.

Median, although pedantic,
Gratifies the urge semantic:
Average is less precise, sir;
Further, *median* is nicer!

Sigmas always knock 'em colder
Than a herring in a polder.
Statisticians' words are magic;
Not to understand 'em's tragic.

Frame of reference is bully—
Satisfies at once and fully.
Cracks like this one, made discreetly,
Prove your scholarship completely.

Verbal kin to live chameleons,
Fooling sagest Aristotelians,
King of words is *integration.*
It has truly swept our nation.

Useful, too, is *social climate.*
(Weather? No, you silly Primate!)
Metaphorically stretching
Common words is always fetching.

Organismic is another
One to try on Dad and Mother.
Its Gestaltist implication
Shows your true sophistication.

Guidance also is a pippin.
Its prestige is simply rippin'.
(Drop the adjective *vocational;*
Guidance now is *educational.*)

Unit, core, and *group activity*
Show your cordial receptivity
To the newest methodology
With its streamlined terminology.

Shun all terms like *course of study,*
Discipline, and *subject,* buddy.
These are rated unprofessional,
Stigmatizing, so recessional!

EDITORIAL

The Greeks Didn't Have a Word for It

TO MANY conscientious thinkers the application of the ideals and principles of Progressive Education to the secondary-school field has been unfortunate. To them the most conspicuous effect of the transformation is the loss of definiteness of task, the disappearance of the old criteria by which one could tell whether the pupil was passing or failing.

If a youth wrote, in examination, that the "difference of two squares" was some quarrel between the residents of two adjacent city blocks, or if he ventured that "Ohm's law" was passed in 1896 by the Ohio legislature, there was a certain satisfying definiteness about the contrast between these statements and the facts. But to all appearances these modern educators are exhibiting an alarming tolerance of pupil ignorance.

There are two modern techniques which help create this impression. The first is the adaptation of instruction to individual differences. The old determination to bring every pupil up to a pre-conceived minimum performance has given way to the effort to have every pupil approach his own maximum. This sounds like an opportunity for each pupil to define his own task—and define it, if he is so inclined, in term of a minimum of effort on his part. And this, in turn, sounds like an invitation to indolence.

The second technique is that of evaluating in terms of social purposes the list of things that a high school pupil might be called upon to learn, and selecting as curriculum material those which promise something. Punctuation is an element that most of us like to teach. Once teacher and class have been put in possession of a given textbook in grammar, the task is definite and success is determined by the ability of the pupil to see eye to eye with the author. But we have begun to push the semicolons into the background and pay more attention to the *effectiveness* of the pupil's discourse; and when we do that, our exact standards disappear.

In short, to some recent critics the high-school boy seems to be going nowhere in particular. He is apparently out for a stroll, to enjoy the air and sunshine, the society of his fellows, and incidental entertainment, until dinner time. Perhaps some measure of this criticism is justifiable. Some degree of uncertainty and lost motion is to be expected of any transition period. The experimenter is quite likely to do some ridiculous things. At any rate, it is fair to expect us now to clarify our purposes and redefine our standards.

The contemplation of this condition of affairs has led some critics to turn, like Lot's wife, and look back. President Hutchins has reached a stage of desperation where, as Porter Sargent so aptly puts it in the March issue of THE CLEARING HOUSE, he would have us start over again at the point where the Greeks were when they had been somebody and were beginning to be nobody. Others are asking us to return to the old slogan of "scholarship".

"Scholarship" will not do. To use that word to describe the goal of the high-school population is to stultify the real scholars of this age and of the past. That term belongs to the realm of higher education, and to a minor fraction of the inhabitants of that realm. The purpose of secondary education is something quite different.

COMPETENCE is the word. This country needs millions of COMPETENT young people. It needs young people COMPETENT to take an active and intelligent part in public affairs; young people COMPETENT to look after their own health; young people COMPETENT to use leisure

in such a way as to leave a good taste in the mouth; young people COMPETENT to prepare for a vocation; young people COMPETENT to undertake a college education.

The sooner we accept COMPETENCE as our goal, the sooner we shall be on our way. The more clearly we see it, the more direct will be our efforts. And the more cleverly we analyze it, the more efficient will be our techniques. H. H. R.

Youth Education Today

The American people should not think of youth as a group to be ignored, or as assets to be exploited, or as children to be pampered and indulged. The proper treatment of youth is a most important question for society to decide. It is not a problem solely for individual parents and schoolmasters. Any civilization that fails to conserve its human resources, particularly its children and its youth, is contributing to its own destruction.

America must plan to absorb its youth. There must be opportunities for young people to earn a decent living and to make provision for wholesome recreation. Youth should have the chance to make their own choices. We must not continue our haphazard economic and social organization, with its alternating panics and booms and its dreadful waste in human lives. Thoughtful men everywhere realize that it is unthinkable to allow the few to exploit the many, thereby creating industrial wrecks and throwing aside jetsam that has to be cared for by society in general.

SUCH IS the brave though somewhat negative assumption set forth by the Commission on Youth Problems of the American Association of School Administrators which prepared *Youth Education Today*, the recently published Sixteenth Yearbook of the Association.[1] The Comission examines the present status of youth in relation to such factors as sex, geographical distribution, and jobs. It recommends a reorientation of the school curriculum in terms of the realities of present-day problems.

In one outstanding chapter, it seeks to unveil youth's personal problems and adjustments which need sympathetic study and consideration. The members of the Commission are perhaps not sure whether they are glad or sorry that the interests of youths are so fundamentally self-centered and socially innocuous as they find them to be.

Excellent as the Yearbook is in many respects, it must somewhat disappoint those citizens who ask themselves what American youths may do with the society that they inherit.

May American youths, too, be galvanized into such intense enthusiasm and devotion to a cause and program as are those of Russia, Italy, Germany, France and other aroused countries of the world? Could anything except their own good times excite whole-hearted enthusiasm in our youths? If not, are we content that they are unconcerned? Or are we a bit wistful that they might come to care?

In Chapter V, "Creative Citizenship," one surmises that a somewhat impatient member of the Commission "got the bit between his teeth". He urges that "a deep regard for democracy and an intelligent appreciation of democratic institutions" be cultivated, that "qualities of character and methods of action which are of special significance in a democracy" be developed, that "the willingness and ability to coöperate effectively" be fostered; and that "an active interest in and concern for the progressive development of the democratic ideal" be promoted. "The attainment of the goals will require more than wishful thinking," he asserts.

This chapter is the high spot of the Yearbook. Its author gets beyond the bloodless spirit of detached scientific inquiry; he shows concern for social consequences. He wants youth to serve his democratic society for the good of his fellowmen and for posterity as well as for his own security and selfish exploitation of the culture that he has inherited. P. W. L. C.

[1] Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1938. 509 pages, $2.

SCHOOL LAW REVIEW

Negligence Actions Against Teachers

By DANIEL R. HODGDON, PH.D., J.D., LL.D.

Actions against teachers, alleging negligence, have been on the increase recently and, to a certain extent, are tending to demoralize the progressive work of our modern school systems.

Within the past few months an action was started against the teacher of a corrective class who was conducting work in a gymnasium at a central high school, in New York State. A little girl fell from a balance beam and broke her femur bone. An action for $125,000 in damages was commenced against the district superintendent in charge of the supervision of the school; the board of education; and the teacher.

A few weeks later a suit for $33,000 in damages was filed against the gymnasium instructor and the nurse at a high school in New Jersey, on behalf of a child 15 years of age, for injuries sustained when she fell in the high-school gymnasium on December 7, 1937.

This complaint alleges that the instructor failed to provide safety mats, and endangered the safety of the students by permitting too many students to overcrowd the gymnasium, and by permitting untrained and incompetent students to assist in the instruction. It is also alleged that the nurse was negligent in keeping the child, after she was injured, in her custody for many hours before medical aid was summoned.

In California the higher court has reversed a decision in favor of a laboratory teacher and sent the case back to be retried to determine the liability of the teacher and of the board of education for negligence.

Parts of Justice Strother's opinion, written for and concurred in by the other justices of the court, show the possibilities of liability of a teacher in a chemical laboratory. Justice Strother says:

"The defendant, the Union High School District of —— county, is organized under the provisions of the law. The course of instruction includes the teaching of elementary chemistry. For the purpose of teaching chemistry, a laboratory was provided with appropriate equipment, including chemical substances with which to perform the standard experiments prescribed by the textbooks. Among the equipment of the laboratory which was provided by the school for that purpose were a sink, benches, a cabinet containing various ingredients used for experiments, and an iron mortar and pestle. The experiments were presumed to be supervised by the teacher of chemistry. (A certain Chemistry textbook) was used for that subject.

"Among the experiments which were required in that course was the compounding of certain explosives. This experiment was designated as No. 40. It described the process of making ordinary gunpowder. After a general recital of the component parts to be used for compounding solid explosives, and the effect of oxygen and heat upon them, instructions were given for performing the experiment.

"The plaintiff, —— ————, was a boy of good intelligence. He was sixteen years of age when the accident which is involved in this suit occurred. He had attained the grade of a junior in the high school. He was a member of the chemistry class and had just commenced his laboratory work in company with other students under the supervision of Mr. ——, the chemistry teacher.

"Various ingredients used for performing the required experiments, such as charcoal, sulphur, potassium nitrate, and potassium chlorate were kept in the laboratory in a cabinet or on a shelf in small pasteboard boxes. The plaintiff, in company with two other students, had twice previously performed the gunpowder experiment.

"In the laboratory, under the supervision of the chemistry teacher, on October 27, 1930, —— was attempting to repeat the same experiment for the third time. Instead of pulverizing the ingredients upon separate sheets of paper as directed by the textbook, they were mixed together and ground in an iron mortar by means of a pestle. Instead of using potassium nitrate as directed by the textbook, either by mistake or otherwise, potassium chlorate was substituted therefor; or both substances were used. Both of these ingredients were kept in similar separate boxes on the shelf directly in front of the bench where the students were performing the experiment.

"While the plaintiff was mixing the ingredients, an explosion occurred which blew off his left hand and seriously injured his right hand. His right eye was completely destroyed, and his left eye was injured. He is now scarcely able to read or see. He was compelled to procure a glass eye to replace his

destroyed right eye. His injuries are serious and permanent.

"Suit for damages for personal injuries sustained as a result of alleged negligence in failing to properly instruct or supervise the performance of highly dangerous experiments on the part of the students was commenced."

"From the record in the present case, it may be reasonably inferred that there is substantial evidence to indicate that the defendant was guilty of negligence in failing to exercise reasonable care in providing and labeling dangerous materials to be used in chemical experiments, and in failing to properly instruct and supervise the selection, compounding and handling of dangerous ingredients used in manufacturing explosives.

"It is not unreasonable to assume that it is the duty of a teacher of chemistry, in the exercise of ordinary care, to instruct students regarding the selection, mingling, and use of ingredients with which dangerous experiments are to be accomplished, rather than merely to hand them a textbook with general instructions to follow the text.

"It is the province of the jury to determine whether the mixing of the ingredients which were used to compound gunpowder in a mortar by means of a pestle increased the danger of an explosion; whether the plaintiff was without previous knowledge or instruction regarding the danger, and whether that process was knowingly permitted to be followed by the pupil without warning from the teacher. It may also be a proper question for the determination of the jury as to whether the delivery of a textbook to an inexperienced pupil with mere instructions to follow the text, in the performance of a dangerous experiment in chemistry, is a sufficient exercise of care.

"In other words, if the jury should find that it was highly dangerous to mix together potassium chlorate, charcoal, and sulphur in an iron mortar by means of a pestle, it would become a further question of fact for the jury to determine whether the teacher was negligent in failing to warn the pupil of that danger, particularly if he observed the boy following that method and knew that he was inexperienced in that science."

"The evidence shows that Mr. ——, the chemistry teacher, was present in the laboratory during the experiment which resulted in the explosion; that he stood immediately behind the plaintiff and saw or may have seen not only the selection of the ingredients, but also that they were being mixed together in the iron mortar instead of being pulverized separately on sheets of paper, as directed by the textbook; and that he failed to warn the student of the danger of that method. The plaintiff testified in that regard."

"From the foregoing evidence a reasonable inference may be drawn that the chemistry instructor saw the grinding of the ingredients in the iron mortar with the pestle, yet he failed to warn the boys against the danger of that method of mixing them. He knew the boys were then compounding the materials for the experiment of manufacturing gunpowder. The plaintiff testified that just before they began the experiment he 'went up to Mr. ——' and said, 'I and Angelo are going to make that gunpowder experiment.' The instructor consented to their doing so.

"The plaintiff testified that he did not know the difference between potassium nitrate and potassium chlorate; that they looked the same to him. They were kept in similar boxes on a shelf near the mortar where they were mixing the ingredients."

"The respondent argues that the plaintiff recklessly experimented with the dangerous ingredients with knowledge of that danger, just to get the thrill from an explosion. Fairly considered, we think the evidence discloses no previous knowledge on his part of the identity or danger of using potassium chlorate, or of mixing together in an iron mortar the ingredients for compounding gunpowder. The reasonable inference secured from the record is that the plaintiff was mixing the gunpowder ingredients for the very purpose of obtaining an explosion, which is the result for which the textbook experiment is intended. The text reads: 'From this experiment we may see that solids may explode.' "

Manstrangelo v. West Side Union High School District of Merced County et al. 42 P. (2nd) 634.

This case raises questions such as these:

1. Is a board of education liable for negligence in permitting a textbook containing a dangerous experiment to be used in a high school?

2. Is a superintendent of schools liable for negligence in approving or allowing such a textbook to be used?

3. Is a principal of a school negligent in approving of the use of such a textbook?

4. Is a teacher in a chemical laboratory liable for negligence in assigning a dangerous experiment of this character to a pupil?

5. Is the teacher liable for negligence in failing to see the errors committed by a pupil in performing a dangerous experiment, or for failure to properly supervise the pupils' activity?

6. Is the laboratory teacher liable for negligence in keeping within the pupils' reach a chemical which might result in injury to the pupil should it be used by a mistake on the part of the pupil?

7. How carefully must a teacher instruct pupils before starting them on an experiment?

Many questions of this type will be settled when this case is finally ended.

BOOK REVIEWS

PHILIP W. L. COX, *Review Editor*

The Student Editor, by JAMES W. MANN, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938. vii + 149 pages, $1.

This text is designed to meet the needs of both junior-high-school teachers and pupils engaged in the publication of school newspapers and magazines. It is an elementary guidebook in editing and publishing, but in no way treats journalism from a technical viewpoint.

The book emphasizes the need for coöperative effort to fit the newspaper or magazine into the school life so that it has a distinctive "personality", is representative of the school, and has an educating function.

In his treatment of the subject the author has presented stimulating suggestions for keeping school newspapers within the news class; ideas for the development of unusual feature departments, and several detailed processes by which the pupils' writings may achieve final publication. D. T. Duff

Household Mechanics: Industrial Arts for the General Shop, by EARL L. BEDELL and ERNEST G. GARDNER. Scranton, Pa.: International Textbook Company, 1937. 130 pages.

This household mechanics book is a contribution to the field, and those subjects which it covers are very nicely worked out. Its scope is, as the name implies, strictly household mechanics. It should not be confused with the broad term "general shop". Each subject is well covered, and has accomplished the author's aim of giving the information on a level suitable for instruction in the junior or senior high school.

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Teaching About Vocational Life, by MILDRED E. LINCOLN, Ed.D. Scranton, Pennsylvania: International Textbook Company, 1937. 617 pages, $4.

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How to Study Handbook, by ROBERT W. FREDERICK. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1938. 442 pages.

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The Scientific Study of Educational Problems, by WALTER S. MONROE and MAX D. ENGLEHART. New York: The Macmillan Company, Inc. 1936, xv + 504 pages, $3.

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Laboratory Manual for Unified Physics, by Gustav L. Fletcher and Sidney Lehman. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1938. 210 pages, paper-bound 88 cents; cloth-bound, $1.04.

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Guide to High School Biology, by Edna Craig and George K. Stone. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1938. 146 pages, 96 cents.

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Myers-Ruch High School Progress Test (Grades 9 to 12), by Charles Everett Myers, Giles M. Ruch, and Graham C. Loofbourow. Yonkers: World Book Co., 1938. Form A, $1.20 per package. Specimen set, 20 cents per copy.

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Un Drama Nuevo, by Manuel Tamayo Y Bans (Joaquin Estébanez). Edited by Clarence King Moore and J. Horace Nanemaker. New York: Silver Burdett Co., 1937. 124 pages, 92 cents.

An Outline of Civics, by Raymond R. Ammarell. Philadelphia: McKinley Publishing Co., 1937. 96 pages, 52 cents.

Problem Studies in Economic Geography (Revised Edition), by Lenox F. Chase. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1936. 135 pages, 96 cents.

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The Cuthbertson Verb Wheel. New York: D. C. Heath & Co., 1937.

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The Fourth Yearbook of Short Plays, selected and edited by Lee Owen Snook. Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson & Co., 555 pages.

Country Life Stories, by Elizabeth Perry Cannon and Helen Adele Whiting. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1938. 95 pages.

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High School English (Junior Books 1, 2, and 3). By Henry Seidel Canby et al. New York: The Macmillan Co. Books 1 and 2, 1936; Book 3, 1937. Book 1, 337 pages, $1; Book 2, 413 pages, $1; Book 3, 454 pages, $1.12.

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thy Dakin. New York: D. C. Heath & Co., 1937. 478 pages, $2.40.

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Junior English Drills (Books 1, 2, and 3), by Mollie John and Ruth White. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1935. Book 1, 78 pages; Book 2, 91 pages; Book 3, 91 pages; 40 cents each.

Junior English in Action (Books 1, 2, and 3) (Revised), by J. C. Tressler and Marguerite B. Shelmadine. New York: D. C. Heath & Co., 1937. Book 1, 402 pages, $1; Book 2, 448 pages, $1.08; Book 3, 474 pages, $1.16.

Learning to Write, by Reed Smith. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1937. 544 pages, $1.68.

Thoughtful English Composition, by Fred G. Fox. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1936. 184 pages, 72 cents.

Lorna Doone, by Richard D. Blackmore, adapted by Rachel Jordan et al. Chicago: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1938. 312 pages.

Writing of Modern Prose, by Virginia C. Perkins. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1936. lxxvi + 313 pages, $1.20.

Adventures in Literature (Book 2), edited by J. M. Ross. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1937. 656 pages, $1.32.

Adventure (Revised Edition), by Tom Peete Cross et al. New York: Ginn & Co., 1938. 589 pages, $1.92.

Modern-School Arithmetic (New Editions), by John R. Clark, Arthur S. Otis, Caroline Hatton, and Raleigh Schorling. Yonkers: World Book Co., 1938. 7th Grade Edition, 292 pages, xii + 292 pages, 76 cents; 8th Grade Edition, xii + 308 pages, 76 cents.

Besides Business, by Carl du Sabot. St. Louis: D'Alroy & Hart, 1936. 70 pages, 85 cents.

Interpreting the Public Schools, by John Earle Grinnell. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1937. 360 pages, $2.75.

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Occasionally school marks mean less than nothing. Einstein failed in mathematics. Hendrik van Loon failed in history. Grammar schools called Darwin and Rousseau stupid, and dropped them, while Shelley and Poe's low marks kept them from finishing school. A high-school failure in physical science barred Marconi from university training.

A modern state

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The modern program of guidance for the high schools of Georgia, published in March, 1938, lists many guidance books for supplementary or reference use—but recommends only six guidance books for basic use by teachers as manuals. These six books comprise the four volumes of the INOR GROUP-GUIDANCE SERIES, Brewer-Glidden's *Newspaper Stories for Group Guidance* (also published by the Inor Publishing Co.) and one book published by another company.

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THE EDUCATIONAL WHIRL

(Continued from page 537)

and why are not officers of each organization elected by proportional representation? After all, it is the teachers' dollars which keep these conventions going. Or are we to preserve democracy for future *citizens?* R. B. N.

Democracy on Three Fronts

1. Democracy and dictatorship go hand in hand in the school game. The more democratic you are, the more regimentation you must apply to your school.

2. We believe in the essential principles of democracy in this school, but no pupil has the right to question any of the school's regulations. That's anarchy!

3. Political discussions have no place in our civics classes. The schools must be kept free of politics.

F. G. L.

Teach as You Preach

It was at T.C. The course was methods. One hour and forty minutes had been spent on just how to plan and present a stimulating assignment.

The bell rang. Brief cases clicked. Feet shuffled. The class was in motion. The voice of the professor was about drowned. One caught, "AND READ THE next chapter, and write a . . ."

One is reminded of Mark Twain's "To be good is noble. To teach others to be good is nobler." (And much less trouble.) C. W. R.

Vacation Plans

I am going to read a book I want to read.

I am going to talk of things I want to talk about.

I am going to have life experiences I've neglected for so long.

I'm going to sock the first person who mentions an educational shibboleth or challenge to me . . . or shall I challenge him to a duel? My bags, James!

R. B. N.

Drip! Drip!

Our historians tell us how it happened.

"Intelligence was seeping down through the favored few of the upper classes into the ranks of the common people." Barnard and Roorbach, *Epochs of World Progress,* p. 373.

Add: There was no one on hand to stop the seepage. F. G. L.